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## Nintendo

## OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK





#### GAMES OVERLOAD!

Prince of Persia Mario Party 5 Beyond Good & Evil F-Zero 2 (GBA) True Crime MoH: Rising Sun Fire Emblem Harry Potter Yu-Gi-Oh!

# FIRST PLAY COUNTY STATE CUDE appendy page of the county page of the c

Mario & Luigio

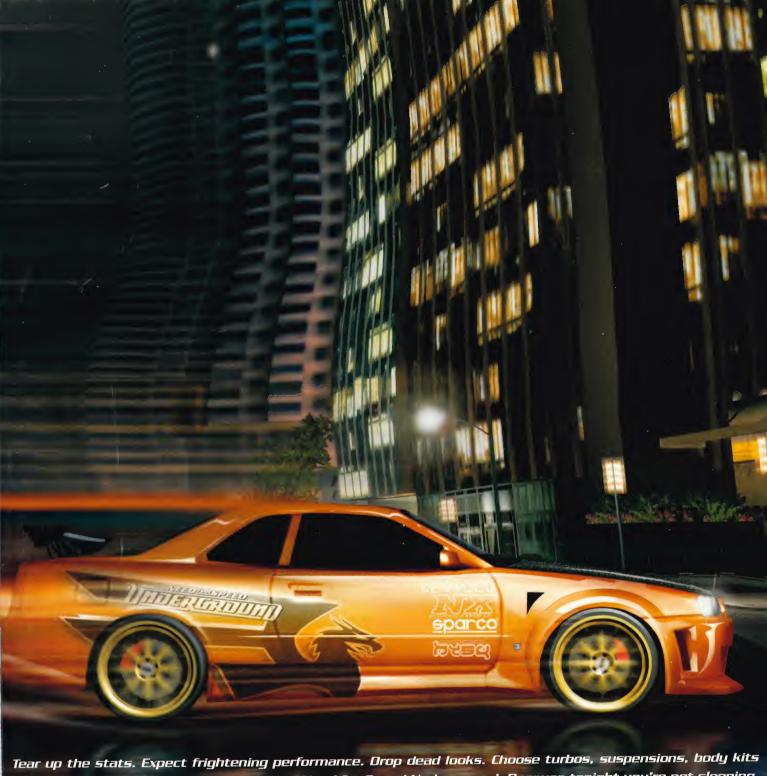
The brothers are back to save Christmas
Plus: Win a £2000 LCD TV and DVD combo!

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CKEMON COLOSSI





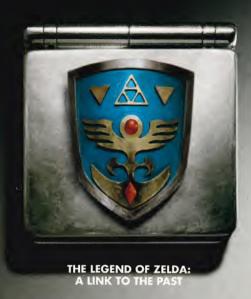
and of course, nitrous. Enter the World of Need for Speed Underground. Because tonight you're not sleeping.







### Fun, anywhere!



















Please note: Game Boy Advance SP is not available in any of the special designs featured above.

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## Mario Kart: Double Dash!!

As if it could be anything else sitting proudly atop the charts this month. GameCube seems to be undergoing a racing revival with Double Dash removing the excellent F-Zero GX from on high.

Mike and Tim are still doggedly battling each

other, determined to settle the score once and for all. That's what Mario Kart does to people, that's what Nintendo does to people. Does PS2 have Mario Kart. Does Xbox? Didn't think so. And with GameCube sales going through the roof, more and more people are coming round to our way of thinking.

Last month's number one, *F-Zero GX*, slips down to eighth, crushed under the weight of the Christmas bandwagon.

#### TITLE Mario Kart: Double Dash!!

- LOTR: The Return of the King
- True Crime: Streets of LA
- Star Wars: Rebel Strike
- Need For Speed: Underground Tony Hawk's Underground
- FIFA 2004
- F-Zero GX The Simpsons Hit and Run
- Billy Hatcher and the Giant Egg

#### PUBLISHER

Nintendo

FΔ Activision

Activision FΔ

Activision

Nintendo

-Vivendi

There are too many mediocre games in here. *Monsters, Inc.? MONSTERS, INC.?*! What the hell are you lot thinking?

#### TITLE Finding Nemo

- Pokémon Ruby
- Pokémon Sapphire Spyro Attack of the Rhynocs
- Monsters, Inc.
- Super Mario Advance 4 Sonic Advance 2
- Scooby Doo! Mystery Mayhem
- Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeondice Monste

#### **PUBLISHER**

- THO
- Nintendo
- Nintendo Vivendi
- THO Nintendo
- Sega THQ
- -Konami
- Konam



## to NON UK



A year ago Link was in dock and the brandnew karts were lockedup in Mario's garage...

We'd only just seen the first few shots of Viewtiful Joe, too. We didn't know what to expect. It always looked cool, but now we know it's one of the freshest games to arrive in ages.

Chill out, followers of the Nintendo faith. We've gained loads more allies since the GameCube price cut, GBA is still flying off the shelves and Pokémon is as popular as ever. There were loads of killer games in 2003, but 2004's got Metal Gear, Final Fantasy, Killer 7 and tons more cool titles. Twelve months is a long time in games and next year will be sweet.

**Enjoy the mag!** 

Turn Street

Tim Street. Editor





OFFICIAL MAGAZINE U

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(and what they want from Santa this year)

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#### ANSWERS TO THE ROCK-HARD OUIZ, p33

1) Charizard; 2) Totodile; 3) Kyogre; 4) Latias; 5) Celebi; 6) Groudon; 7) Absol; 8) Pikachu; 9) Igglybuff; 10) Nidoking; 11) Blaziken; 12) Suicune; 13) Koffing; 14) Teddiursa; 15) Vigofth; 16) Aggron; 17) Mew

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ALWAYS EXCEED THE STATED DOSE



JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.

## January 2004











p071. Rare hardware special















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## Things we didn't know last month...

1 RPGs can be hilarious (Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga, p76) 2 We were right! (True Crime: Streets of LA, p86) 3 War can be tedious (Medal of Honor: Rising Sun, p82) 4 You'd send us dirty laundry (Your Mail, p126) 5 A game would escape the software house before it had been started, let alone finished (Hugo Bukkazoom!, p102) 6 Groudon would look this scary in 3D (Pokémon Colosseum, p10) 7 Pac-Man would still be THE MAN (Pac-Man vs., p62) 8 Dean would don parachute pants and play with royalty all night (Prince of Persia, p48) 9 There were 19 better games than Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004 this year (The Best Games of 2003) 30 Mike would know the Mushroom Kingdom like a London cabbie knows the Square Mile (Double Dash short cuts, p106)









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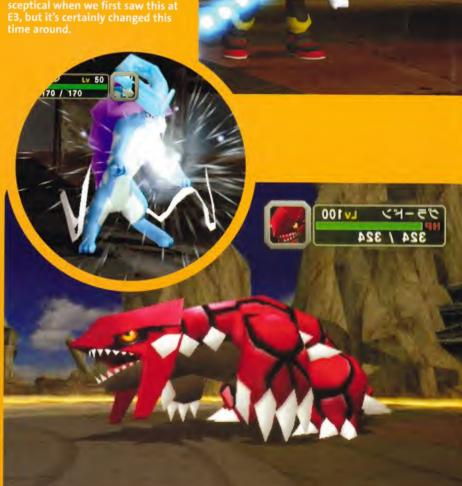
## Pokémon Col

Pokémon in 3D you may have seen before, but nothing as cool as this. Imagine you're the star of a Ruby and Sapphire cartoon, with a whole 3D world to roam.



Fast-forward three and a half years and for the first time Ruby on GameCube, but the monster mashing isn't just confined to the battle arena. We may have been sceptical when we first saw this at













### The full story

#### New teams, new enemies...

Teams Aqua and Magma are nothing compared to the conniving opponents you've got to confront in Colosseum. The main enemy in the game is Team Shadow, a band of mercenaries who turn Pokémon Dark by using special machines in the headquarters of Team Snatch. As their name suggests these guys love to nick stuff, taking Pokémon back to their HQ in Ekuro Canyon.

And surprise, surprise, you've got to

stop their master plan to create the ultimate Dark Pokémon by defeating their Trainers using the help of Mirei – a female Trainer who senses the darkness in Pokémon.

The Scenario mode kicks off as you plant a bomb at Team Snatch's hideout, leap onto your Speeder Bike and power across the desert, Snatch Machine in hand. Can you save all the Dark Pokémon? Well? CAN YOU?!



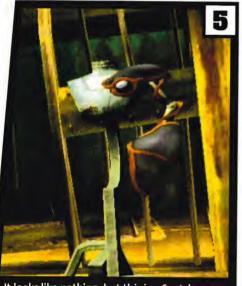


He's heading for this hideout. Check out the headquarters of Team Snatch.

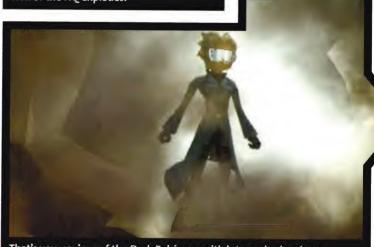


Suddenly the desert peace is shattered as a wall of the HQ explodes.





It looks like nothing, but this is a Snatch Machine, part of the reason you're here.



That's you, saviour of the Dark Pokémon with intense body odour. Actually that's the rubble and dust from the explosion you triggered.



Unlike the previous N64 Stadium games the action now lets you roam a complete 3D world, the all-new Oore region, where Ruby and Sapphire monsters and 67 Gold and Silver creatures appear en route. You'll kick off with just two, Umbreon and Espeon, but you'll soon be hot on the heels of Metagross, Heracross and those infamous mutts, the Legendary Dogs Even Celebi pops his onion-shaped head out of retirement for a blast at the 3D big time

Developed by new Nintendo collaborators, Genius Sonority, you'll get to travel across the region, finding different towns complete with Poké Marts and Poké Centres all in glorious 3D You'll get to see your team re-energised at the Poké Centres and see tons of awesome items including Poké Balls ready for sale. Trainer battles

aren't restricted to indoor arenas though as you'll be unleashing your Pokémon out in the wilderness, in training schools and even on building sites. You can even try chatting to Pokémon who fly, run or crawl alongside their Trainer and listen to their cries

Your goal is to find the Dark Pokémon, a breed of creature that's had its heart sealed. You've got to capture them and set about healing the poor little fellas. Dark Pokémon have five health bars. the more they have, the darker they are. At its darkest the creature only has one attack, Dark Rush, but by healing it the Pokémon gains more moves. To heal the poor mite you've got to use an all-new command, Call Out, to calm it down. This replaces the old Run command and pulls your Pokémon out of its Hyper State that makes it

"Poké Marts and Poké Centres both in full 3D





Detonator in hand, 60mph on the clock, you're safe to blow this place sky high.

Remember this place, it's the first town you come to in the game. Look there's even a Poké Centre in 3D!



God wasn't happy with Umbreon after it peed behind the couch during EastEnders. Take this bolt of lightning, mutt!

Dark. They'll also get better if you keep them in your team or put them in a Day Care Centre.

Cue close-up of Pokémon Trainer with his stereotypical huge spam, spiky hair and

massive eyes. No wonder you need huge shades, pal.

Travelling Oore is an awesome experience and a 3D Pokémon world is just what we've been waiting for. Movement is restricted though, you can't just head out into the unknown whenever you want. Specific places are marked on your map for you to travel between so there's no true sense of adventure as seen in the handheld quests Some areas also look a little too bland in places and characters love to glide over the surface as if places like the Oore desert are made of ice.

Those looking forward to some inventive minigames like those in Pokémon Stadium will be disappointed, too. But when a game puts you in the middle of an adventure that gives you a real feeling of the classic cartoons you'll forget all



### Somewhere out there...

The region of Oore where the game takes place has tons of areas to explore and Trainers you'll meet

along the way.
Once you've escaped
from Team Snatch's hideout
you arrive at your bolt-hole, a post-apocalyptic scene if ever there was one, where a ruined train lies sunken in the desert sand. Inside you'll find a TV where reports are coming through of a police bust on Team
Snatch's HQ. It's now your
mission to get to the
nearby city and find an ally
so you can start hunting down those elusive Dark Pokémon. Here are just a few of the places you'll see on your travels.

### **Ageto Village** This is where the best

Poké Trainers go when they're old and can't control their bladders. Mirei's grandparents live here and you'll learn about the power to cure Dark Pokémon, too.



#### Pokémon

- Watch: ■ Celebi
- Hitmontop
- **■** Wynaut



#### Paira Town

Visit the cops and the town's colosseum. Someone's nicked the machine that powers the stadium and it's your job to go and find it. Once done, you can enter the competition.

#### **Pokémon** Watch:

- Psyduck
- Zubat
- Flaffy
- Igglybuff



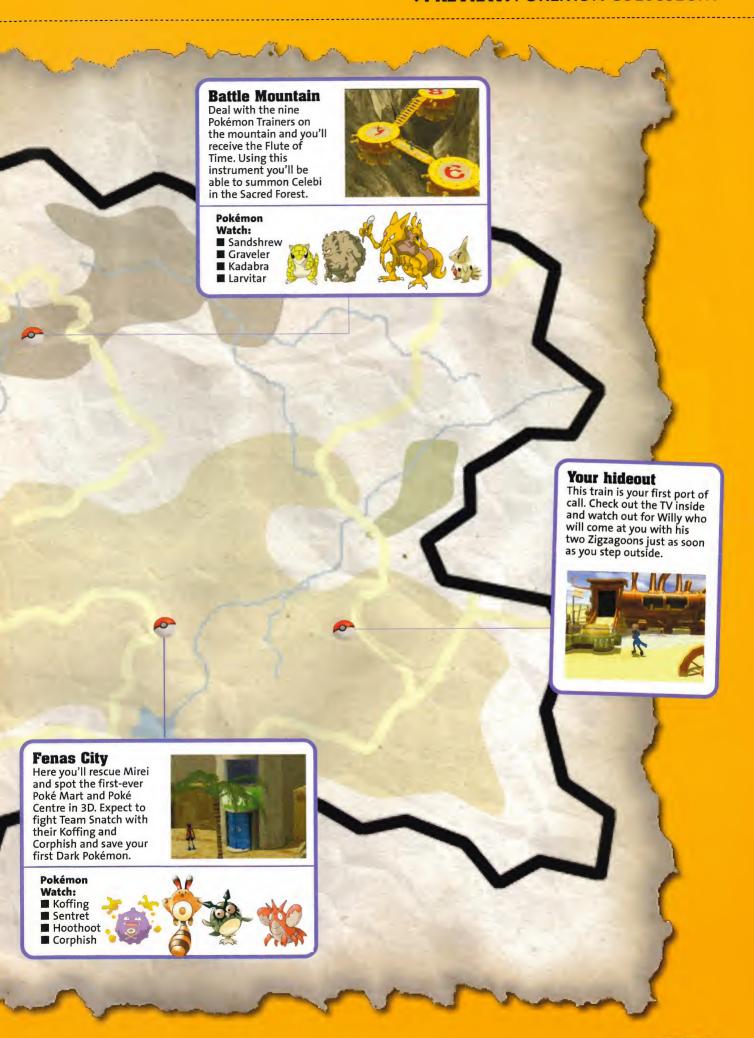














### **Get organised**

#### Part mobile, part PC, check out the new breed of Poké Gear.

We've had the Pokédex, Poké Gear and Pokénav – all very useful - but in Pokémon Colosseum you've got something even better to play with – the Pokémon Digital Ássistant, or PDA for those without the time

to use long words.

This device is a cross between a mobile phone and the old Pokédex so you can swot up on your Pokémon knowledge and view the ones you've caught all in sweet 3D.



#### Snatch list

This menu is just like a Pokédex and will give you loads of information about its original Trainer and if they are still Dark.

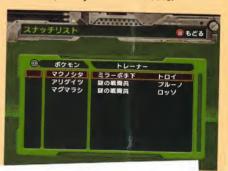


#### Memo list

Here you can see all the Pokémon you've found and battled as well as hearing their cry. You can also zoom-in and rotate them.



You're not alone travelling Oore – regular updates will offer hints on what to do next. Keep an eye on this for sure.



## "It's a totally new direction; the wishes of Pokémon fans have finally been answered."

about the old games like tumbling Togepi and gutsy Golbat. That's not to say the GC version doesn't nod to the N64 games because, in addition to Scenario mode, the Čolosseum mode is just like the battles you saw in Stadium, with a few next-gen adjustments thrown in.

As battle animations go they are a whole lot better than Stadium from the moment your Poké Balls are hurtling towards a rival and your Pokémon burst out to confront the enemy. Throw in some pretty cheesy battle anthems to turn up the heat and Colosseum will certainly satisfy all you hardcore

Pokémaniacs out there.

The attack animations are inventive and seeing the new attacks such as Groudon's Earthquake and Kyogre's Water Pulse in full-on 3D is just what you want if you're into your Pokémon. Remember when you first saw *Red* and *Blue* creature attacks in 3D? Well it's that feeling all over again, but this time with GC power.

Now there are no Cups to win, but each of the six colosseums has specific rules of Pokémon entry so you'd better have trained them hard on your GBA. If not you can always use those you've captured on your travels through Oore or the computer will select some Types at random for you.

As in Ruby and Sapphire, two-on-two battles are now in 3D as well and, just like next year's

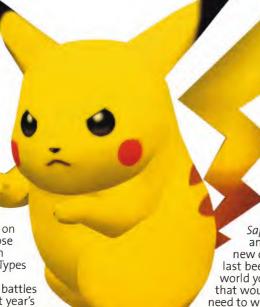
Crystal Chronicles, up to four of you can battle together at the same time, but three will need GBAs and a copy of Ruby or Sapphire to select commands from the menus.

The Pokémon action doesn't end there though. Now there's Battle Mountain – a kind of Royal Rumble for Pokémon (thankfully without the sweaty spandex-wearing juggernauts). Here you can take on 100 Trainers as they get progressively harder, so you'll need some exceptional Pokémon with some killer moves if you're going to go all the way to the top. A cheeky incentive has also been

added to this mode to help you become an awesome Trainer. By winning battles you'll collect Poké Coupons which can be exchanged for old favourites like Ice Beam and Psychic TMs. Various Herbs can also be bought, which all add up to

cure your Dark Pokémon.

Colosseum is a few months away from hitting the UK, but for Pokémon fans this is going to be another title worthy of your collection. Seeing the new *Ruby* and *Sapphire* attacks in 3D makes all the difference and with the developers heading in a totally new direction the wishes of Pokémon fans have at last been answered. It's easy to do, now let's see a world you can fully roam around just like in Hyrule – that would be sweet. Pass me some paper, Dean, I need to write to Japan... Tim Street



### Pokémon stuff you *can* get

Pokémon Colosseum won't be out for a few months yet, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy loads of *Pokémon* games this Christmas.

As we exclusively revealed last month, two new *Pokémon* Super Paks are already on the high street begging to be bought — especially if you haven't got a copy of *Ruby* or *Sapphire*. These Paks contain a copy of the game, Pokémon carry case and best of all a red or blue GBA SP complete with Kyogre or Groudon varnished on the top.

In addition to *Puby and Samphire* there's more handhold magic with *Pokémon* 

In addition to Ruby and Sapphire there's more handheld magic with Pokémon Pinball Ruby & Sapphire. It's similar to the original, with a new Pokédex to fill as you travel across Hoenn on the two tables and evolve your creatures. Cool new Pokémon games and kit for Xmas POKéHON RUN



Somebody's been feeding Croconaw something a little special. Just look at its eyes



Check out that dude's hair - it even looks like a Poké Ball. And take a look at his Power Ranger sidekicks!

The developer: Genius Sonori

What it's done: This is their first GameCube game, but some of the team are ex-Dragon Quest developers.

Multiplayer: 1-4 players

Connectivity: Hell yeah,
baby. This is the game
connectivity was invented for - you can see all your captured Pokémon in 3D, but make sure you keep training those beasts hard The publisher: Nintendo Release: TBC Review: sometime next year,

we reckon

**Predicted** score

Nintendo has worked hard to offer something new and that must be applauded. It's looking like the best GC Pokémon game of next year.

the chance to get Celebi if you get further into the game.

UK release date for the e-Cards, but

to be the bearer of l

Japan for

games on your TV. If in *Colosseum* there'd

That's a no-go, my friend. *Colosseu* will only allow you to transfer you

Pokémon from either *Gold, Silver,* or *Sapphire* versions of the game. soon-to-be-released *Pokémon Fire* 

Green Leaf

released a bonus disc that you'll up if you've ordered a Japanese o Colosseum. This disc will give you

So c'mon, what's the best bit so far?
Seeing the relative sizes of Pokémon on
GBA is hard, but on 'Cube they look
blinding. Just seeing the huge ass of
Wailord dwarfing tiny Pikachu in 3D Scenario mode is wicked, but after a few hours we were already quite a way into it. Either take a break and play Battle Mountain or you could have this licked after a few plays. makes for some memorable momen

on Christmas Day

rest assured you'll hear about them first in *NOM UK* when we get the news, **about, eh?** Well, Nintendo haven't stopped with the two *Zelda* collector's discs and hav

what could be

## SUMPSIDE UP DOWN, AROUND, UNDER AND OVER,







eggsclusively for











### What We Know

All the Nintendo news you need

## New machine on

Nintendo drops a bombshell on your Christmas turkey: new hardware will be unveiled at E3.

Nintendo has confirmed it will unveil a brand-new games console in 2004. The venue for this momentous event will be the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) which takes place at the end of May in Los Angeles. E3 is the biggest games show in the world, so it's the perfect event for Nintendo to flex its muscles and make the gaming competition cringe like scolded children.

Intriguingly though, nobody outside of Nintendo Japan knows what this new machine is all about. But it's what the machine ISN'T that's causing the real shockwaves through gaming circles.

"The nature of the product has not been announced", a Nintendo spokesperson told NOM UK, "but we can

NOM UK, "but we can confirm it is not the successor to GameCube or Game Boy Advance."

Sorry? What was that?
NOT the successor to GBA
or GameCube?! Then
what the hell is this
thing? Clearly Nintendo thinks that
there's room in the average Nintendo
fan's life for a third machine.
Fascinatingly, the Japanese
announcement refers to "a
conglomeration of hardware and
software". That got our minds a-buzz.

In Japan and all over Asia, TV games are booming. For the unfamiliar, we're

referring to joypads with built-in games that plug straight into your TV – in anyone's language, the very definition of "a conglomeration of hardware and software". Let's roll this on, shall we?

Nintendo has just shipped its iQue device in China (basically it's an N64 TV game), so it has the expertise. Of course, there'd need to be a big new game on

the thing to make it worthwhile. And what big new game have Nintendo gone awfully quiet on of late? That's right – the next Mario game.

It's fun to speculate, isn't it kids? But the second any more cold, hard facts (or juicy rumours) surface, you'll read them here first. Because nobody is closer to Nintendo than NOM UK.



### Virtua Fighter RPG

### First-ever pics of Cyber Generation. Oh yes!

"Here's our Virtua Fighter RPG!" said Sega Japan, before showing us a game that wasn't what we were expecting. You see, Sega's Yu Suzuki has previously confirmed that a GameCube-exclusive big-head RPG called Virtua Fighter Quest was in the works. This is called Virtua Fighter: Cyber Generation.

But yes, it is the same game. The Virtua Fighter characters appear only to play a fleeting role in the game, as the star is your standard weedy RPG hero. It has also now been confirmed for PS2 as well, but we know you'll want a peek at these cool pics anyway.







### WIN the Famicom SP

We got one and one of you lot gets to have it!



Look at the picture. For most of you, that's the closest you'll ever get to the super-ultra-mega-limited-edition Famicom SP. There are only 3,000 of these babies in the world and only REALLY stupid money on eBay is ever going to

That's why you need to win it. It's an extraordinary prize, so there'll be no obvious question here. Nope, we want to make sure it goes to the person that wants it the most. You've got thirty words to convince us that's you. We'll start you off with "Give ME that SP, because..." and the rest is up to you. Thirty words. Any more and you're disqualified. Shut up – we

> We'll print the ten best entries and the winner, right here in the mag. Entertain us, make us cry, disgust us, whatever you feel will swing the benevolent gaze of NOM UK your way. It's a prize well worth humiliating yourself for.

### FREE Zelda game

Okay, okay, so it's not that free really...

If you think back, ooh, about six months you'll remember our E3 issue. Specifically, the unveiling of TWO new GameCube Zelda games: Four Swords and Tetra's Trackers. Well, for two now read one as Nintendo is going to issue both games on a single disc of love.

That's good because Tetra's Trackers' sports-like competitive gameplay may not have been worth the asking price on its own. With a Japanese release now slipping to February, it's looking like the UK will get it in the Summer. We know you're dying for another proper episode in the Zelda series, but believe us: this is one of the only games we've seen so far that



Four Swords – a great way to make and break friendships



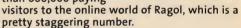
### TOO MUCH INFORMATION

#### PLAY ON, KIRBY

Okay guys, you can drop the Kirby threat level back to Def Con 3. When HAL Labs guru, Masahiro Sakurai, quit the company in August, his pink creation looked in serious jeopardy. Speaking to Nintendo Dream magazine in Japan, HAL Labs confirmed that a new Kirby game was in the works. GameCube? GBA? Well, that's unknown as yet. But take comfort that the pinkest guy in games lives on.

At the present time, it stands as GameCube's

sole venture into the brave new world of online gaming. Phantasy Star Online has popped up on a few other consoles as well and the overall user numbers point at a rosy future for the RPG. Sega claims it has had more than 600,000 paying



#### **GAMECUBE BACK IN PRODUCTION**

Hey, we told you not to worry. GameCubes are once again rolling off the production line at Nintendo, after the manufacturing was halted in February to clear stock. Many idiots saw this initial move as the death knell for our beloved Cube, but they're eating their words now as a sales spike has seen Nintendo consolidate second place in the European console market.

#### **METROID MASTERY**

We love *Metroid Prime*. And we're good at it, or at least we thought we were. But there's a guy who calls himself 'Radix' that makes us look

extremely lame. He can plough through the whole game on Normal getting 100% of the items in a staggering one hour and thirty seven minutes. Of course he's well rehearsed and you

need to be to get time from the average first-time clock time of around 14 hours. You can watch him do it here: www.planetquake.com/sda/mp

#### **BEST NES GAME EVER?**

It's Dragon Quest III, according to a poll carried out by Tokyo's Metropolitan Museum of Photography. In fact, four Dragon Quest games showed up in the top 10. Second was Super Mario Bros., third was the original Mario Bros. and



Legend of Zelda came fourth. The big shock was Super Mario Bros. 3, languishing in 12th spot.

#### **IBM ONBOARD FOR N5**

American computer giant IBM has announced that it's going to provide the processing grunt for the next generation Nintendo machine. IBM makes the 'Gekko' chip that powers GameCube and is reportedly working on an application of its PowerPC technology for that machine's successor.



## Nintendo gets its bonus disc to the hardcore in

Last month, we talked about the Legend of Zelda bonus disc that was in the new Mario Kart: Double Dash hardware bundle. And yes, we boo-hooed a bit that established Nintendo gamers were missing out on a seriously collectable disc. We speculated it'd show up in the Stars catalogue and did it ever. As quickly as December 1st, in fact.

The 4,500 points required to bag it was a big ask. Our own Mike Jackson went from jubiliation to despair, dropping all his points on the OLD bonus disc before the new one came up. As expected, the

new disc flew out of there in a couple of hours. A thousand went up just after 2pm and a little over two hours later they were all gone. The wise among you would have been on the spot, as we gave you the date on our website: www.nintendomagazine.co.uk Don't fret though, because Nintendo says there will more up soon.

We've been hammering the bonus disc here at *NOM UK* and some of these games we haven't laid eyes on in literally years. A word of warning, though: the disc only runs on 60hz mode. Here are some thoughts on what you'll get.

#### LEGEND OF ZELDA (NES)



We recognised loads of creatures in this one and the dungeon lavout set a blueprint for the series that still thrills today.

#### **OCARINA OF TIME (N64)**



Your fave-ever game, reprised here as it was in the limitededition Wind Waker package. Too awesome to give away? No!

#### WIND WAKER DEMO



You get a peek at the Stealth, Dungeon and Island sections. It'd make you want Wind Waker BADLY if you didn't have it.

#### **ZELDA II: ADVENTURE OF LINK (NES)**



Feels more like an RPG than any other 2D Zelda, and a lot like a Mario game, but it's still the black sheep of the family.

#### MAJORA'S MASK (N64)



Despite dodgy sound, this is a revelation. After OoT, many wrote this off as cheap, but it's the darkest Zelda of all. Essential.

#### SPECIAL MOVIE/RETROSPECTIVE



Basically a Zelda trailer. Dull. The Retrospective gives a glimpse of all the Zelda games, including the cool GBC Oracle titles.

Instant reaction to this month's hot topics from people like you.

Want to have a go? Send your name, address, phone number and email address to NOM UK's Feedback Team, Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 SUW. And please include a half-decent photo.	HAS IT BEEN A GOOD YEAR FOR NINTENDO?	2 WHAT SHOULD BE NINTENDO'S PRIORITY NEXT YEAR?	BWHAT WILL YEAR'S BIG GAME?	WHAT DO JAPANESE GAMERS HAVE THAT YOU WANT?	SWHAT'S BEEN YOUR BIGGEST GRIPE OF 2003?
CHRIS HARRIOT, A FISH TANK	Yes, very good!	It sould be bringing out more games from the crazy mind of Mr. Miyamoto.	Next year's big game will be Pikmin 2.	Japanese gamers get all the best technology first – it sucks!	The biggest disappointment of 2003 was the fact that <i>Pikmin 2</i> got pushed back so far so suddenly.
CRAIG MCCARTHY,	Overall I'd say okay. It could've been better and it could have been worse. A few more sales would have been good, though.	To try and get a grip on the market and get more ads on the TV.	Any <i>Zelda</i> game that comes out. I personally love all <i>Zelda</i> games.	The cool RPGs. They're much better than anything we get.	Lack of online games. PS2 and Xbox owners can play online, why can't we?
JAMIE DORAN, LIVES IN A BIN	Yes and no. Quality games have been produced and sold, but they ain't sold too many!	Make another GBA! Nokia and Sony are applying the pressure big time now!	Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes. What could be bigger than that?	Winning Eleven 6. Grrrr!	The Wind Waker. It's way too easy and boring.

### **WIN three GBAs**

#### with Pokémon Pinball Ruby & Sapphire\*

Another competition and even more Nintendo goodies. This time we've got three GBAs, each with a copy of *Pokémon Pinball* to hand out to lucky winners who can answer the question below correctly. Pokémon Pinball was reviewed last month and scored a sweet 83%, so no Pokémon fan should be without it.

Q. In our review last month, we revealed how many tables are in *Pokémon Pinball Ruby & Sapphire*. How many would that be? a. 10 b. 6 c. 2

By text: 'nomcomp PINBALL' plus the letter of your answer

By phone: 0905 053 1102

By post: Pokémon comp, NOM UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW



### Ninflatable instructions

We're not being patronising, you might not know...



Remove Ninflatable from magazine.
Liberate it from the polythene prison and notice there are two valves on its person.



The valve on the character's body, that's easy. Fill that with air expelled from your lungs. Blow hard. Erect your enemy.



The valve on the base is a cheeky one. Fill that with water, so your Ninflatable springs back after you chin it. Do that first.



4 And there he is, all inflated and ready for a pounding. Now hit him. Hit him in the face. That feels good doesn't it?

#### TOO MUCH INFORMATION

#### **ONE CART LEGEND**

The best GBA link-up games are the ones that only need one copy of the game. And now you can add *F-Zero: Falcon Legend* to that pretty short

list. Just released in Japan, Falcon Legend allows head-to-head racing with just the one kart. We imagine the range of craft and courses increases with a two-cart link-up, but at least you get something for nothing. Smart.



#### TRADEMARK FRENZY

It seems Nintendo has been busy at the Japanese trademarks office. As well as renewing its 'Famicom' name and logo (possibly hinting at some rebirth for the machine we know as the NES) it's also trademarked 'origin of our TV games'. That might be for an ad campaign, or it may refer to Nintendo's next piece of hardware having some historical significance. Hmmm...

#### **NAMCO KONGAS ON**

It's not even out in Japan at the time of writing, but Namco has gone on the record to say that the



Donkey Konga games will keep on coming. This is hardly surprising, since Namco's taiko drumming game Taiko no Tatsujin has seen three different PS2 iterations as

well as six coin-op variants.

It's an awesome game and we'll know soon if Donkey Konga can top it.

#### MORE MONEY THAN SENSE?

Don't you just hate commoners? It's bad enough that they allow people without yachts to buy the sleek GBA SP, but they insist on just carrying it around in their pockets. As if the very design of the thing was enough to protect the screen from scratches. Well, the rich can prove they are better now. Leather specialist Mulberry is selling a sleek SP carry case for a mere £49. The commoners would probably rather buy two new games. Pah!

#### **MIZUGUCHI SPILLS BRAINS**

When Tetsuya Mizuguchi left Sega recently, hardcore gamers everywhere gulped. He's never

made a GameCube game, but, with the likes of Sega Rally, Space Channel 5 and Rez on his CV, he's clearly a genius. Well, now he's between jobs and writing a weblog at http://mizuguchi.net.

Run it through Babel Fish (http://world.altavista.com) and see what the crazy genius has on his mind.

#### HOT OR NOT

Are you Britain's Sexiest Gamer? What a crap award to win. We'd rather be ugly and GOOD AT GAMES, thanks all the same. Farcically, there has been a competition. Tall northern TV man Vernon Kaye hosted the ceremony on December 11th. At press time, we didn't know who had won, but you can still check out the badly-ripped-off-from-Am-I-Hot-Or-Not site at www.sexiestgamer.com.

### Nintendo<sup>®</sup>

The developers cheated. so we kicked them out!

AT DID THE *F-ZERO* PANSION DISC, LEASED ON 64DD IN AN, LET YOU DO?

WHICH *SUPER MARIO KART* CHARACTER HAS TO BE UNLOCKED IN DOUBLE DASH?

*Mario & Luigi* is the THIRD IN A SERIES. NAME THE OTHER TWO

HAT'S THE FINAL ASK YOU GET TO USE MAJORA'S MASK?

HOW DOES THE US SUPER NES CONTROLLER DIFFER FROM THE UK ONE?

VHAT EFFECT DOES COLLECTING ALL 120 CTARS HAVE ON THE PENGUIN IN *MARIO 64*7

WHICH GAME SERIES FEATURES MAGNITES FLOORMASTERS AND BUZZ BLOBS?

HOW MANY DIFFERENT FIGHTERS ARE THERE IN SSBM, INCLUDING THE HIDDEN ONES?

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLAYING IN ETERNAL MODE ON ETERNAL DARKNESS?

FOR WHICH CONSOLE WAS THE VERY FIRST *WAVE RACE* GAME RELEASED?

"Umm, it let you have extra ships?" (0) Moss, that's hardly a turbo start is it? It let you make your own tracks, man.

"Toad." (1) Yes. Imagine if it was Mario? Many children would surely have cried.

"Umm. Super Mario World and the first one... Super Mario Bros." (0) What are you a student of? Certainly not Nintendo. Not even close.

"Oh no. Umm, the Mask of Majora? I've got that game as well!" (0) Sometimes the obvious answer is the right one. But not in this instance.

"Was is larger? No, it had more buttons. No, the buttons were a different colour!" (1) Make up your mind, Moss! You got there in the end.

"I don't know." (0) So you never got all the Stars? SHAME ON YOU. You missed a fat penguin.

"Can I guess? The Legend of Zelda?" (1) Yep. You'd know them if you saw them. Especially the dirty Floormaster.

"Something like 20?" (0) Yes. Something like 20. Twenty-six in fact, so your 'something' was a bit too vague.

"It's easier. Or harder." (0) Oh my God, Moss. That's the most pathetic

answer ever.

"That's N64." (0) That's wrong. It was originally a Game Boy game. We know, because we are powerful.

RICHARD ALTHORPE, 14 STUDENT

"Umm... er. Play against more characters and add more tracks?" (1) We were looking for 'track editor'. But you were closer than Moss.

"Toad." (1) Well, it looks like everyone's bought Double Dash already. What's Santa gonna bring now, eh?

"Super Mario World, Super Mario 64." (0) You as well? No, that's not right. Anyone remember Paper Mario? Hello?

"Is it the... I know the... Deity mask?" (1) It is. Do you think we should give away an actual Fierce Deity Mask as a cover gift?

"The buttons were different colours." (1) Yes. All dirty greys and purples. It makes us glad we're not American.

"Is it.. umm... repeat the question.

Does he disappear out of the game?" (0) Your stalling tactics are no good here, Althorpe. And that's a bad guess.

"Metroid?" (0) You've risked it and it's backfired. It's a shame, but it happens. To people like you, anyway...

"Umm... 25, I think." (1) It's 26, but we'll give it to you. The last one takes AGES to unlock.

"I haven't played it. I'll guess the cameras are different or something." (0) Well, BUY IT. You can get it for as little as £15 now. The answer is unlimited health, magic and sanity.

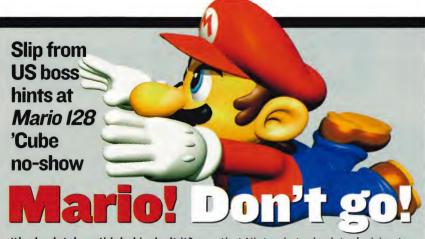
"Umm, the Super NES?" (0) Nope, but well done for not guessing N64. It's the Game Boy.

> He claimed to have revised for the quiz and it paid off. Even with our

super-hard questions, he triumphs.

**FINAL SCORE** 

It's upsetting when a CHILD defeats an ADULT. You must be gutted that your extra years counted for nought



It's absolutely unthinkable, isn't it? Mario 128 skipping this hardware generation and instead showing up as a launch game on the next home machine, currently codenamed N5. Don't blame us, though. This dark thought was uttered by Nintendo of America's top man, George Harrison, who told CNN that Mario 128 was "definitely not certain to appear on GameCube".

Obviously, we went screaming to a bemused Nintendo of Europe for clarification. "We have no information on this", they told us. Which actually put our minds at rest. This is the game – let's not forget –

that Nintendo took a late decision to not show at E3 2003 for fear of competitors leeching ideas from its genius. It's now nine months further down the line and still no news.

We'll obviously keep you posted with the latest developments, but the message for now is Don't Panic. Mario is never far from Nintendo's mind, as it reiterated to Nintendo Dream magazine in Japan. The idea of a new horizontally scrolling Mario game for GBA was mooted and representatives admitted that they were constantly kicking around new ideas for Mario games – witness the awesomeness of Mario & Luigi.

### **Defensive Tactics**

### Final Fantasy Tactics Advance creators defend their battle system, exclusively in NOM UK.

We raved about Final Fantasy Tactics Advance in our review in NOM UK 135, but hardcore fans soon got in touch to complain. These established FFT heads didn't appreciate the changes to the battle system and the random rules it threw up.

Final Fantasy Tactics fans seemed not to enjoy the changes made to the battle system – specifically, the battle judge that would enforce arbitrary and often random rules during battles. Why make these changes to the system? We put this very question to the guys at Product Development Division-4 of Square-Enix. And they answered.

"As a handheld game, we wanted to avoid players having to follow a long scenario and playing for long periods. We aimed to create a game in which players could enjoy themselves with relatively short battles and scenarios whenever they have some time to do so.

"Also, we decided to create a game with a brighter note than the previous games in which we had dealt with heavier concepts such as war, and life and death of people. Each battle was organised not as a real war situation, but more like a sports game.

"During the game, the judge raises a card for a penalty, which should remind

you of a soccer match. That's the 'Judgement System'. In a real war situation, you win only if you are stronger than the opponent. In the game, however, you have to change your strategies in accordance with the changes in other relevant elements. You can also select the contents of the judgement rules so that the difficulty level can go down significantly. We wanted players to enjoy the variation of the game play."



### FUTURE FIVE

It changes every month. The games we want most of all



#### **ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS**

Seven people work on the magazine you're holding. Only four of us can play the new Zelda game when it arrives. That's bad maths.



We're already holding preliminaries to see who gets selected. This month: the caber toss.



#### POKÉMON FIRE RED GBA

Yes, yes, yes. We know. More Pokémon. But more importantly, those natty little wireless multiplayer adaptors are coming, too.



We're total slags for gadgets and tangled wires can have tragic consequences. Do the words R.I.P. Dave McComb ring any bells?



#### DONKEY KONGA

We want to play the bongos with gaming's most instantly recognisable monkey. We want to pat, clap and slap to the rhythm in



an entirely non-self-conscious way. And with Donkey Konga we will. Just you watch us.



#### **METROID PRIME 2**

You'll see this right here every month until it drops into our filthy mitts. Or until Retro Studios give up game making and retire to the priesthood.



If it's half as good as *Metroid Prime*, it's going to KICK ARSE from here to Tallon IV.



#### **METAL GEAR SOLID: THE TWIN SNAKES**

It's going to the same as the PSone game? Don't make us laugh. The über-geniuses behind Eternal Darkness are reshaping this into a modern



classic and it looks better than any supermodel pyjama party you care to mention.

### The BIG Christmas

#### THE TV

Are you in the mood for a spot of footy? Bet you don't fancy running about in shorts – it's bloody freezing outside. Instead, you could hook your GameCube up to this awesome 20-inch LCD flat-screen TV, load up FIFA 2004 and

enjoy the game in the warmth and comfort of your home. This super-thin screen displays vibrant colours and a picture of the crispest quality. Question: how sweet would it look in your bedroom? Answer: sweet.



THE DVD PLAYER



TOSHIBA

Maybe you've already got a DVD player – most people have – but can your one record from the TV straight onto a hard drive? No? Ha! With a 60Gbyte internal hard disk (that's a

lot of memory), this can. It can also play and record DVD-Rs, as well as play VCD, CD, CD-R and CD-RW. If you don't know what all that means, we'll translate for you — it's the nuts!

## Compo

Christmas is here again. It's a time of giving (or for begging for cool pressies). Your parents are in good spirit, but no matter how generous they seem, if you asked them for an LCD TV and a DVD RAM recorder – over £1,600 worth of kit – would they get it for you? If yes, you're spoilt, but most of us aren't that lucky. However, thanks to Electronic Arts you could win all of this stuff AND six of EA's latest GameCube games, including FIFA 2004, by answering a simple question. Regain your calm, then read on...













Just think, you could soon be playing FIFA 2004 on your new Toshiba LCD TV – you could even record yourself on the DVD.

#### **HOW TO ENTER**

#### By phone

Dial 0905 053 1104, answer the question and leave your name, address and telephone number.

Write your answer clearly on an envelope or postcard and send it to: BIG Christmas Compo, NOM UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW.

#### By text message

Text the words nomcomp 'XMAS' and the letter of your answer to 83149. Unfortunately, this service is not available for users of the Virgin network.

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ! All entries for these competitions must be received by 15/1/2004 to qualify.

### 

What's incoming on Nintendo ...

#### 12/12/2003

- The Sims Bustin' Out (GC)
- Medal of Honor: Infiltrator (GBA)

#### 19/12/2003

- The Sims Bustin' Out (GBA)
- Need for Speed: Underground (GBA)

#### 30/1/2004

• NFL Street (GC)

#### 6/2/2004

Rogue Ops (GC)

#### 13/2/2004

Sonic Heroes (GC)



#### 20/2/2004

Harvest Moon (GC, GBA)

#### **FEBRUARY 2004**

- Beyond Good & Evil (GC)
- Resident Evil: Code Veronica (GC)
- World Championship Pool (GC)
- Puyo Pop (GC)

#### **MARCH 2004**

- Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes (GC)
- Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time (GC)
- Beyond Good & Evil (GC)

- Pitfall Harry (GC, GBA)
  Tak and the Power of JuJu (GC)
  Sphinx and the Cursed Mummy (GC)
- R: Racing Evolution (GC)

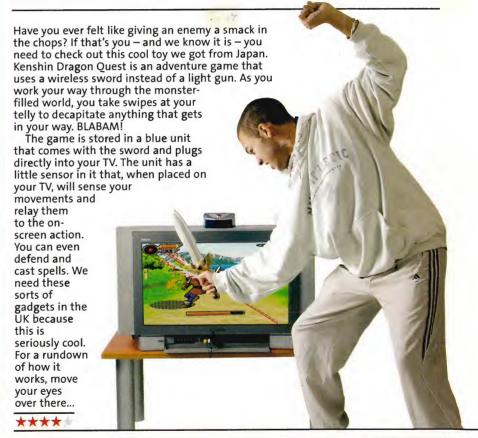


Games are software. Here you'll find

**★ CRAP** ★★ NOT AS CRAP ★★★ AVERAGE ★★★★ WICKED ★★★★★ THE NUTS

### Slice 'n' dice, baby

Pads? Who needs 'em? Hack 'n' slash enemies on TV for real!



#### CORNER Chris Kohler identifies the things that'll make you rich in years to come THIS MONTH, MAKE A MINT ON MONKEYS

**Donkey Kong Vintage Plush** Etone, 1982

Current asking price: around £10

That's right, before DK got a red tie and a snappy attitude, he was a goofy, fuzzy bedtime toy. These DK plush toys - in three different sizes - may have been sold in stores, but were mostly found in grab-a-toy machines and for winning those rigged carnival games. Ah, memories...



**Intellivision Donkey Kong** CBS, 1982 Current asking price: around £8

DK played like crap on the Intellivision and allegedly to make up for that CBS ruined the box art. Donkey Kong looks like a hideous alien; a far cry from Miyamoto's cuddly, loveable ape. **But LOOK AT MAZZA! Rippled** muscles, no hat and a shiny mullet - disgusting!



# the stuff that isn't.

Mike holds the sword forward to make his adventurer stride boldly into a dark, dank dungeon. Ahh! Nasty, evil, blue floating things! Slice them to

death!



This flamethrowing, wizard dude wants some. Mike holds the sword sideways to repel his fiery attacks, then sees him off with a fierce He-Man style forwardslash.



Time to finish him off.
Mike goes irate in front of the telly, swiping through each red globe to activate a killer five-hit combo in a ninja style. Eat sharp metal!



Mike escapes, only to be attacked by a skeleton warrior. Chopping him isn't working. Mike summons magic and guides the flames with his blade of power.



### DON'S DEALS

This month's killer gaming bargains.

#### GAMECUBE





NBA Courtside £4.99 (www.simplygames.com)





Star Wars Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II £9.99 (www.woolworths.co.uk)





Resident Evil Zero £16.99 (www.play.com)

#### **GAME BOY ADVANCE**





Turok Evolution £12.99 (www.woolworths.co.uk)





Star X £7.99 (www.play.com)





Ecks Vs. Sever II: Ballistic £9.99 (www.game.uk.com)



## USA SPECIAL REPORT

#### **US** gamers come together in the backwoods...

This past Halloween, Yankee gamers from up and down the East Coast emerged from the darkness of their parents' basements and converged on the Hotel Clarion in the historic colonial town of Williamsburg, Virginia, which was playing host to the second annual Mid-Atlantic Gamers' Festival, or MAGFest. Following in the grand traditions of Japanese anime conventions and Trekkie gatherings, MAGFest featured panel discussions, vendors selling everything from game music CDs to Dance Dance Revolution pads, a video room showing old Super Mario cartoons, an auction featuring classic high-priced collectibles, and trivia contests with cash prizes.

Nintendo junkies turned out in droves and at the end of the first night came the costume contest. Notable prize-winning entrants included a smashing set of Super Mario Bros. (as

pictured below), a slightly-too-accurate Link, Viewtiful Joe and Maximillian Roivas from Eternal Darkness. It's a pity no-one turned up as Alex Roivas - that would've made our day.

Of course, what the kids really showed up for was the live concert on Saturday night. The set kicked off with the game-influenced rapping of DJ Potatoe, followed by performers Virt and Wave Theory, who blasted out some retro NES tunes. Of course, the stars of the night were the legendary Minibosses (www.minibosses.com), whose guitar arrangements of classic tunes like Mega Man 2, Castlevania III and Punch-Out brought down what was left of the house.

Check out www.magfest.org for more pics of the event and loads of information on the next show, scheduled for October 15th-17th 2004.







#### THE NOM SURVE POLL

### Nintendo's done alright

RESULT

**YES 58%** NO 42%

We asked: there are certainly a lot of big titles about this Christmas, but has. this been a good year overall for Nintel

■ In terms of games, this year couldn't have been bet In terms of sales, Nintendo has its work cut out. ADAM MARABLE

■ Yes, because there was Zelda, the GBA SP, F-Zero GX forgetting the almighty Mario Kart: Double Dash. KYLE MARSH

This has been a good year for Nintendo. Most of the franchises saw a release and *Pokémon* stormed to the charts yet again. DOM WALKĔR

#### This month we ask:

Is Nintendo still perceived as being for kids?

ail YES or NO and a brief comment to: michael.jackson@emap.com – don't forge

Penguin Mother, Super Mario 64

You breezed by, but did you ever stop to think about THE TURMOIL



### Toys... and everything else we can find!

#### **BOARD BEATS!** SSX3 soundtrack available now

Music. It's the food of love. It's also part of the reason, along with sound effects and the noise of controllers hitting the wall, that video gaming isn't a

completely silent pastime. Electronic Arts was so pleased with its new SSX3 soundtrack, that you can now buy it on CD, should you wish to wiggle to the tunes without the distraction of having to slide down a mountain.

It's the kind of music that sounds really annoying if someone's playing it loud next door. All you'd hear is a dull thumping bass noise. Round at theirs though, they'll be grooving to Chemical Brothers, Fatboy Slim and beatier remixes of N\*E\*R\*D and Placebo. It's available, funnily enough, in record shops.



#### POKÉMON SILVER! Tim's American adventure reaps treasure

Sometimes, the big boss man gets to go to America and you don't. That's a hard fact of life and it happens to us all sooner or later. But while Tim was in the US, he grabbed this beauty – a box of the brand-new

Pokémon-e Trading Cards. They're like the old cards, but can be swiped through an e-Reader to unlock new Trainers to battle in the GBA's Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire.

The latest from Nintendo on an e-Reader is that "we have no final confirmation as to when this will be launching". But given that e-Reader cards don't require

localising, you could well see these Pokémon beauties rolled out next year.



## WIN five copies of the Alien Quadrilogy DVD Box set

This box set, out now, contains NINE discs! That's the four movies, plus all the bonus features you'll ever need. We've got five, each with an *Alien* book, thanks to our chums at Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment. Please note, this competition is only open to applicants aged 18 or above – we will be checking...

- Q. What is the name of the space ship in the first movie?
- a. Nostromo b. Sulaco c. Auriga

By text: 'ALIEN' By phone: 0905 053 1103\*







Japan inside



Only two complaints so far. It's going well for Bobby!

- ★ Hello to Japan! Is Christmas time, when Jesus is bring the presents and we are eat reindeer for meal! But what is big tree for? Bobby like to be Doshin and pick up Christmas tree and throw at people. But the police are not come in the game. In Tokyo, Bobby get hit in knees with great power truncheon.
- ★ Have you saw special Zelda collector's disc? It have old Zelda games on it. In Japan, is so hard to earn. Bobby have to walk 400 METERS to game shop, say "Can I have, please" and man is hand it over. For God's sake, it should be more easy. It take Bobby over ELEVEN MINUTE to be home with disc playing Zelda first one. The graphic is AMAZING. Is like even more cel-shading.

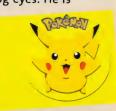


★ Bobby has seen new Nintendo machine! Is hardware and software together! Weird, but was

in second-hand shop. But has very great NEW MARIO GAME called Mario Cement Factory. Graphics processor is so advanced, there is no animation. Only coloured blocks that flick on and off. Music is just go BEEP BEEP. Me think it made by Pharrell and the Neptunes.

★ Is a disgrace about how Pokémon Fire Red is not come in shops until 2004. Bobby Tokyo have needs to catch small creature. Me tried to spray paint a chihauha yellow like the Pikachu, but the paint is get into the dog eyes. He is

paint is get into the can't see and keep running into walls. Is not a satisfying pursuit. When me try and squash him inside Poké Ball made from noodle container he barks with much scary power.



★ You not have heard of the rugby sport in Englandish, but me tell you Japan is winning the WORLD CUP this month! Tokyo-boy Jonny Wilkin-SAN is kick winner points against Austria in the last game final! Bobby Tokyo is so excited, he went around kicking over every bins there was! But none of bins had a roast



chicken inside like in the video games. One of bins had a dead yellow dog inside, but me put that in there.

DISCLAIMER: The views of Bobby Tokyo may differ from those of

### **Double Dash GC bundles**

Just look at the box. It's all colourful and *Mario Kart*-y, and has a *Zelda*Bonus Disc inside. Admit it, even if you already own a GameCube, this is one desirable package. Thanks to Nintendo, we've got two to hand out, as well as a copy of the game for four runners-up. We can see the wave of postcards rushing our way already.

By text: 'DASH' By phone: 0905 053 1101

Q. Which of these Zelda games is NOT included on the Zelda bonus disc that comes bundled with the MK:DD Pak?

- a. Zelda II: The Adventures of Link
- b. The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask c. The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past





#### **ISSUE 134 WINNERS**

#### Competition

- James Whyman, Worksop Katy Jarvis, Doncaster
- Sandra Woods, Stalham
- Louisa Coates, Scarborough
- Wayne Howell, Hounslow

#### Competition 2

- David Douglas, Carlisle
- Ryan Chambers, Gorleston Miss C. Lam, Slough
- Ms A Porteous, Edinburgh
- M. Higginbotham, Maulesfield

#### Competition 3

Main Prize David Kennedy, Preston

- Runners-up
   Trish O'Gorman, Surrey
- David MacDonald, Roslin
- David Houldsworth, Calderwood
- Mike Cass, ThatchamFrancesca White, Abingdon



#### **HOW TO ENTER**

#### By phone

Dial 0905 053 110, then add the number of the competition on the end. So, if you're entering the *Mario Kart* competition dial 0905 053 1101 , answer the question and leave your name, address and telephone number.

#### By post

Write your answer and the competition name clearly at the top of the envelope or postcard. So, for the Mario Kart comp, write to: Double Dash comp, NOM UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW.

#### By text message\*

Text the words 'nomcomp <keyword>' and then the letter of your answer to 83149. So, if you're entering the *Double Dash* comp and you think the answer is b, type 'nomcomp DASH b'. Our other competitions have their keywords alongside the prize information.

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ! All entries for these competitions must be received by 15/1/2004 to qualify.

Viewtiful and Prime notch a hat-trick of nominations.



Usually the BAFTAs are where Hopkins and Winslet go for their annual pat on the back. But of late it seems they're also home to people who know their games nominees for the inaugural **BAFTA Games Awards have just** been announced, with Viewtiful Joe and Metroid Prime scoring three nods each.

Other Nintendo-exclusive titles singled out for acclaim include The Wind Waker, Advance Wars 2 and Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire each getting two nominations. Looking for surprises on the list? Disney Sports Football and Wallace & Gromit both show in the Children's list and the wholly forgettable Big Mutha Truckers appears in 'Animation or Intro'.

The awards ceremony takes place in February 2004.

#### <u> THE NOM SUR</u> RESULT

#### No price cut we're all rich!

We asked: with GameCube's price NO: 60% dropping to £79.99, should Nintendo also lower the price of the original GBA?

- No-one has complained about the price and GBAs are selling more than any other console, so why lower the price? DOM WALKER
- No, I think at £60 the Game Boy Advance is great value. However, I do think the SP costs too much. MIKE AUSTIN
- I say lower it no-one is going to buy one if they can get a brand-new GBA SP for only about £25 more, are they? JAMES STOCK

#### This month we ask:

 Should Nintendo bring the release of its next home console forward to 2004?

ail YES or NO and a brief comment to: michael.jackson@emap.com – don't forget to include your name

YES: 40%

## The ROCK-HARD Quiz

We're squeezing your brain for more answers this month and asking you to name all 17 Pokémon from these crazy close-ups. You can't win anything – just our undying respect.



# EDELLI RESERVE TEPOTTER John Ricciardi

🕨 NINTENDO GIVEAWAYS 🛑 POP-STARS DRESSING UP 🛑 AKIHABARA

### **CLUB NINTENDO**

The big N's much-hyped Club Nintendo points service kicked off this past month in Japan and if first impressions are anything to go by, it's going to be a huge success. The way it works is simple: members are awarded points for every first-party Nintendo game they purchase and, in turn, the points can be used to purchase exclusive goods direct from Nintendo themselves. Added incentives abound — for example, if you buy a game within four weeks of launch, you'll get double the usual points. And the bonus benefits are really choice. Fancy a

free copy of *Pac-Man vs.*? Simply sign up as a Club Nintendo member before the end of the year. It's as simple as that.

The first batch of redeemable prizes is a bit tame, though, including T-shirts, posters, soundtracks and the like, but Nintendo is promising much more exciting gear in the future, including exclusive game demos and special versions of titles that won't be available in stores.

We'll be sure to keep you updated on the growing selection as the months go by...



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Look what they get! LOOK WHAT THEY GET!



### SMAP superstar brings the Mario heat

Goro Inagaki, one fifth of the stupidly popular all-male Japanese pop band, SMAP, has taken on

the role of Mario in Nintendo's big winter sales push in Japan, promoting the three Mario titles due out before the end of the year, Mario Kart: Double Dash!!, Mario Party 5 and Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga.

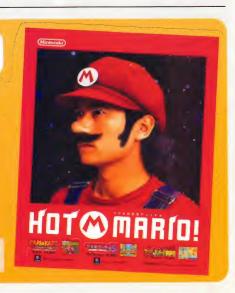
Adverts like the one pictured have been spotted all over Tokyo and there's even a

Mario Kart commercial where Goro, dressed as Mario, goes through a fast-food drive-

thru in a go-kart and orders a copy of the game.

Nintendo couldn't have chosen a more fitting spokesperson; just last year, Inagaki was arrested for a hitand-run fiasco where he nearly ran over a policewoman in Shibuya while trying to get away from being issued a parking ticket. Poor guy... if it were us, we

would've whacked her with a Red Shell and hauled ass outta there.



#### **AXE LORD MIYAMOTO**

These new photos prove that Shigsy's the coolest. If you aren't already kneeling, please do now.





Back because you demanded it, more shots from the streets of Akihabara, Japan's gaming mecca! This month: mammoth slimes invaded game shops everywhere to celebrate the release of Square Énix's Dragon Quest spin-off for GBA, Slime Morimori Dragon Quest (1); while Mario Kart mania took to the streets as this year's most anticipated GameCube game landed in Japanese stores (2). Next month: look out for giant apes terrorising Akihabara's nerd population as Donkey Konga barrels its way onto the scene. Or maybe not.

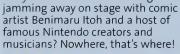




### **KILLER FREEBIES**

#### More cool

Japanese games magazine Nintendo Dream had two straight months of killer giveaways to celebrate its 100th issue in early November. Issue 100 came bundled with a *Phantasy Star Online* music CD with ten tracks from both *Episode* I & II and the forthcoming Episode III, while Issue 101 offered up a stellar DVD video of the recent Mario & Zelda Big Band Live concert held in Tokyo. Where else can you see Mario creator Shigeru Miyamoto





#### JAPAN TOP TEN the current best-selling games on Nintendo platforms

1	Mario Kart: Double Dash!!	(Nintendo, GC)
2	Slime Morimori Dragon Quest	(Square Enix, GBA)
3	Atsumare!! Made in Wario	(Nintendo, GC)
4	Pokémon Ruby/Pokémon Sapphire	(Nintendo, GBA)
5	Legendary Starfy 2	(Nintendo, GBA)
6	Super Mario Advance 4	(Nintendo, GBA)
7	Pokémon Pinball: Ruby & Sapphire	(Nintendo, GBA)
8	Kirby's Air Ride	(Nintendo, GC)
9	Wario Ware, Inc.: Minigame Mania	(Nintendo, GBA)
10	Oriental Blue: Ao no Tengai	(Nintendo, GBA)



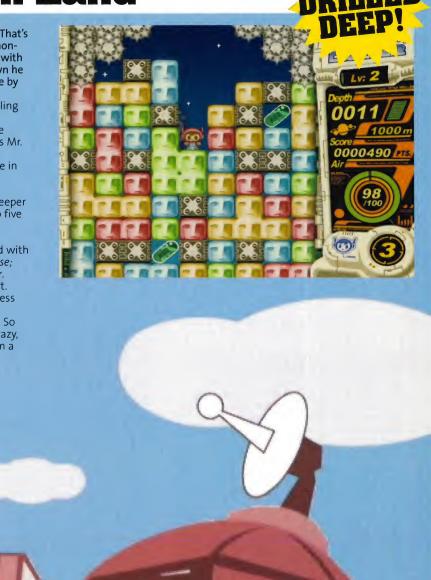
### **Mr Driller Drill Land**

There's this guy and he's called Mr Driller. He drills. That's what he does. He doesn't muck about with other, non-drill-related things. He drops into a deep well filled with blocks which look like sweets and he drills. Down and down he goes, until he reaches the bottom or is crushed from above by falling blocks. The end.

Drill Land is a hypnotic game. It's as easy to play as drilling and dodging, but it hooks you in. You drop into a calm, meditative, trance-like state. You cease to be aware of the world around you. All you can hear is the pop, pop, pop as Mr. Driller goes deeper and deeper. You focus. You tap **(3)** and rhythmically excavate. You stare beyond the screen. You're in the Driller place.

Mr. Driller's appeared on Game Boy before, but the GameCube version expands a simple action game into deeper territory. From the theme park hub, you can head off into five different games: *Drindy Adventure* has Driller in a fedora, mimicking Indiana Jones, avoiding rolling boulders and grabbing gold idols; *The Hole of Druaga* is mining crossed with an action RPG; then there's *Star Driller*; *Horror Night House*; and the classic *Driller* of old, reprised as *Driller World Tour*.

It's gameplay boiled down to pure reaction and instinct. There's no comfort zone. You drill fast and your recklessness might cause a fatal landslide. You go slow and Driller suffocates – his air ticks down with every metre you drill. So you're searching for a balance that isn't there. Drill like crazy, then slow right down to try and grab an Air Canister from a tight spot. You're constantly on edge. Genius.

















# **Star Soldier**

The death of the shoot-'em-up is a global phenomenon. It's not just here where bullet storms are out of fashion, Japan only gets its action on a sporadic basis, too. Even a gem like Star Soldier gets snuck into the shops at a budget price (¥3,000 – that's about sixteen quid in non-mental money).

The big question is why? Star Soldier is

The big question is why? Star Soldier is everything a video game needs to be. You're in a small spaceship that fires almost nothing. Enemies swarm into view and you waste them. You get power-ups that let you fire bullets in all kinds of silly directions. You feel power. You are their daddy. With righteous vengeance coursing through your veins, you start obliterating their resistance. Then from nowhere comes a bullet your cocky mind didn't track. Death. Back to the basic pea-shooter gun. Arsebiscuits! At the dawn of video games, this is

At the dawn of video games, this is what video games were. Shooting. Reactions. Short blasts of high

adrenaline. By the time you've blazed through the first two levels, most modern games are still cracking their

knuckles with their warm-up intro movie. This is action. No messing about.

It's quite old skool. The graphics are polygonal, but it's all fairly basic shapes. Before shooters slipped into a coma, the trend was to have a ship already shooting frightening amounts of hot plasma as you twitched your way through a blizzard of return fire. This is more traditional, building up slowly with waves of cannon fodder sweeping into view. You play for ten minutes. You get further each time. It fits into your life.

We like the two- and five-minute modes that let you set a high score against a set wave of enemies. It's perfect pass-the-pad fodder. NOM UK still loves this kind of thing, because NOM UK is RIGHT and the world is WRONG. Stay tuned for Shikigami No Shiro II next month. We're keeping the dream alive.













GAME BOY ADVANCE TH

Connect the Game Boy Advance™ to the NINTENDO GAMECUBE™ for an interactive strategy guide to game levels ahead.

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# ALOHA ALSO MEANS GOODBYE.



### Pearl Harbor. Sunday December 7, 1941.

Welcome to paradise, soldier.

Fight for your life from the bowels of the USS California to the machine gun mount on a PT boat as Battleship Row burns around you. If you survive, embark on an island-hopping string of nightmares, which will continue across the Pacific – from Guadalcanal to the River Kwai and the Philippines.









# Nintendo

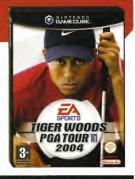
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK presents...

# THE BEST GAMES OF 2003



### Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004

■ The greatest golf game ever created should be perfect chill-out fodder, but it gets pretty heated around here. We never blame the controls though, because they're perfect. We blame God.



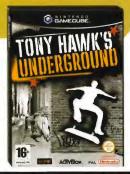
### **Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising**

■ Proving that lightning can strike twice, Nintendo's second palm conflict was just as compelling as the first. We used new units, we learned new strategies and we were triumphant. Eat that.



# Tony Hawk's Underground

■ Just when you think Tony's getting too old for those baggy skate pants he ollies the halfpipe in the sky and grinds all over your half-baked preconceptions. Inventive, addictive and totally awesome.



### Ikaruga

■ Appearing like a ghost from another time, Ikaruga bathed our souls in napalm and then slipped away. A stark and ingenious reminder of why shoot-'emups cannot be allowed to die out.



### **Super Mario Advance 4: Super Mario Bros. 3**

■ We'd explored this part of the Mushroom Kingdom twice before, but it's still a slice of platforming perfection. New to it? You can dress Mario in a frog suit. That's all you need to know.



# Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow

■ Konami's latest gothic adventure is an absolute killer. Explore, leap and brutally smash creepy beasts with your whip. Once it sucks you in, that's it. You won't touch your GameCube 'til it's all over and done.



# **Super Monkey**

■ There's room for AiAi in any top 20. Timeless single-player action combined with a ton of multiplayer fun mean this monkey's magic. It's the reason analogue was invented.



### **Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell**

■ Splinter Cell invented proper video game stealth. Your arse will flutter as you stand in the shadows, praying you've got enough cover for that deadly guard not to spot you. Tense and magnificent.



### **Golden Sun: The Lost Age**

■ Huge, brilliant and unashamedly niche, The Lost Age takes its broad sword and spreads RPG goodness an inch thick all over your GBA. Book a month off work/school/prison you'll need it.



### Star Wars: Rebel Strike

■ You've played Star Wars games before, but this IS Star Wars. They took the best bits from all the movies (except the rubbish ones) and dropped you into some of the most intense space battles ever.



### **Mario & Luigi:** Superstar Saga

■ We were just packing up our games-of-the-year ballot boxes when Mario & Luigi turned up with a blend of RPG and platforming action that's second to none. Damn you guys, but thank you, guys.



### **Pokémon Ruby and** Sapphire

On July 25th, the world stopped turning. Groudon stomped around on just about every GBA in the country and a new wave of Pokémania began. A new world to explore and new beasts to hunt.



# Soul Calibur II

■ The fighting game Nintendo gamers have waited half their lives for. It looks fantastic, moves spectacularly and hits harder than a speeding bullet-train. And who's this bonus character? It's Link. Perfect.



### **Wario Ware Inc. Minigame Mania**

■ Nintendo's schizophrenic history lesson serves up gaming magic in threesecond servings. But the servings keep coming. And coming. So much fun your brain might just give up.



### The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past

■ This sets the bar for Super NES remakes by throwing in the fantastic multiplayer madness of Four Swords on top of the finest 2D action RPG of all time. It's still absolutely magical, even if you've saved Zelda before.



There has never been a racing game as fast as this. And winning is 100% about skill. There are no cheap weapons to bail you out, just your own ability. It's hard as hell, but completely awesome.



# Viewtiful Joe

Capcom's best game in years is a special effects-laden masterpiece. With classic 2D gameplay reinvented for the modern age, it's fun, funky and kicks your ass into outer space.





### **Mario Kart: Double Dash!!**

The most eagerly anticipated multiplayer game of all time totally rose to the occasion. The kart handling harked back to the Super NES days, giving master players the chance to shine on the twisty Rainbow Road. It is not possible to have more fun with your mates than on four-player Mario Kart. That's a fact.



# 12 Metroid Prime

Prime is staggering. It took a 2D adventure game series and reinvented it as a compulsive 3D bug hunt. The gameplay was unmistakably Metroid, the Morph Ball was integrated brilliantly and the atmosphere remains unsurpassed. If you don't have it, it's the best £20 you'll ever spend. Get it today.







### The Legend of Zelda: The **Wind Waker**

The high points of The Wind Waker are the best times you'll ever have playing a video game. And those graphics? Hell, has any game ever looked sweeter than this? Forget realism, we want escapism. This whisks you off to an amazing place for a breathtaking, action-packed adventure. This is why you are into video games.







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# **CHART MUSIC**

Girls Aloud - Jump Alex Parks - What It Takes Busted - Crashed the Wedding Lemar - 50:50 Britney/Madonna-Againt...Music Kevin Lyttle - Turn Me On Outkast - Hey Ya! Fatman Scoop - Be Faithful Pet Shop Boys - Miracles

Enrique Iglesias - Addicted Kylie Minogue - Slow Mis-teeq - Style Blazin' Squad - Flip Reverse Radiohead - 2+2=5 Missy Elliott - Pass That Dutch Black Eyed Ps - Where is the Love

Jamelia - Superstar Chili Peppers - Fortune Faded

### FOOTBALL

Arsenal - Amazing Reds Villa - Holteenders In The Sky Chelsea - Blue Is The Colour Everton - You Are My Everton Leeds - We Had Joy Liverpool - We All Live In A Red.. Man City - Blue Moon Man United - Our Trophy Back Newcastle Utd - Blaydon Races Newcastle Utd - 1 Alan Shearer Southampton - When The Saints Spurs - We Are Tottenham Wolves - King Kenny Miller Wolves -Hey Jones 'E' We've Got That Oouble Feeling If You Know Your History The Liquidator Here We Go - Football Anthem Celtic — Fields of A'Ray

### Notts Forest – Land of Hope

R n B Never Leave You - Lumidee Frontin - Pharrell Williams Snake - R Kelly Feat Tigger Snake - R Kenly Feat Ingger
Crazy In Love - Beyonce
21 Questions - 50 Cent
No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder
Hot In Herre - Nelly
Cant Nobody - Kelly Rowland
Mesmerize - Ja Rule & Ashanti
Christina Anulera - Directy Christina Aguilera - Oirrty Craig Oavid- What's Your Flava

# All I Want For Christmas

126061 Xmas War Is Over- Lennon 143301 Christmas Every Day - Wizard 10B777 126070 Oriving..For Xmas - Chris Rea 126550 Fairytale Of New York-Pogues 126551 Frosty The Snowman 107B03 125307 Jingle Bells Lonely This Christmas - Mudd 1DB687 126010 126022 126553 Last Christmas -Wham 108689 143302 Merry Christmas - Slade 1087B4 126720 Merry Little Christmas Rockin Around The Xmas Tree 125287 125939 125289 126727 126009 Santa Is Coming To Town 108699

126719 **ROCK MUSIC** 126080 Silence Is Easy - Starsailo 121454

Wildest Oreams - Iron Maiden 12452B Maps - Yeah Yeahs Secret Kiss - The Coral 124627 The New Hit - Marilyn Manson 124629 124645 No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder 120017 116463 8ring Me To Life - Evanescence 111603 Living On A Prayer - Guns N Roses Final Countdown - Bon Jovi 112307

124527

### **TOP SELLERS**

123013 Wheres The Love-Black Eyed Ps Thing Called Love -Oarkness 121454 123017 123027 123071 Fatman Scoop - Be Faithful 50 Cent - In Oa Club Pimp - 50 Cent 123041 121418 Only Fools And Horses 123043 108315 Celtic - Fields Of Athenry Pretty Green Eyes -Ultrabeat 108273 121713 107B72 The Great Escape 120616 107003 120495 Superstar - Jamelia The Simpsons 125020 107052 Italian Job 107026 Rocky - Eye Of The Tiger

THEMES
Axel F- Beverly Hills Cop 108195 Great Escape Italian Job 107003 120012 107026 James Bond 107023 120017 Mission Impossible Rocky - Eye Of The Tiger Terminator 107896 108299 116460 111684 The Matrix 107800 107809 Top Gun Phoenix Nights 108304 107825 107872 107052

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**Chart Tones** Westlife - Mandy Girls Aloud - Jump Alex Parks - That's What It Takes **Busted - Crashed the Wedding** Lemar - 50:50 Britney/Madonna-Anainst Music Kevin Lyttle - Turn Me On Outkast - Hey Ya! Fatman Scoop - Be Faithful Pet Shop Boys - Miracles Enrique Iglesias - Addicted Kylie Minoque - Slow Mis-teen - Style Blazin' Squad - Flip Reverse Radiohead - 2+2=5 Missy Elliott - Pass That Outch Black Eyed Ps - Wheres the Love Pink - Trouble Jamelia - Superstar Chili Peppers - Fortune Faded

Top Sellers

Black Eyed Ps -Wheres the Love Breathe - Blu Cantrell Xtm & Di Chucky -On The Wings Crazy In Love - Sevonce Pretty Green Eyes - Ultraheat Italian Job Theme Ready For Love - Elton John Never Leave You - Lumidee Bring Me To Life - Evanescence **Great Escape Theme** The Simpsons Theme Eve Of The Tiger - Rocky Theme Renny Renassi - Satisfaction Innition - R Kelly A Team Theme Something Beautiful - R Williams In Da Club - 50 Cent

Scandalous - Mis-teep **Charlies Angels TV Theme** Misfit - Amy Studt Pink Panther Theme Come on Eileen - Dexys

Monty Python Theme Favourite Things - Big Brovaz Big Brother TV show Forever & Always - Shania Twain Rock Wit U - Ashanti

Recent Releases **Rhythm Bandits Junior Senior** 122400 Its All Good - DMX

126491 Oavdream Believer - Monkees Born In the USA - Springsteen 126494 Can't Touch This - MC Hammer 126400 Sleening Satellite - Aurora Strict Machine - Goldfrapp 125306 125601 Who Said - Planet Funk The Power Of Bhangra - Snap 143297 Mr Vain Recall - Culture 8eat 143298 My Perogative - 8obby 8rown 126392 Santa Cruz - The Thrills 143299 Chung Kuo - Vangelis 126499 Pin - The Yeah Yeahs 143300 Yogi 8eware - Punjabi MC 126409 Come On - Mario

120393 **8est Of Order - David Sneddon** 125565 Anastacia - Prince 124982 Chooza Looza - Maria Willson 126500 Creatures - 311 Fatty Girl - Ludacris 120393 Genie In A Sottle - Speedway 120539 The Chauffer - Ouran Ouran 116215 Brimful Of Asha - Cornershop 120398

Mollys Chamber - Kings Of Leon Ston - Black Rebel Mcycle Club 122445 **Cont Fail Me Now Missy Elliot** 100691 121732 **Holla Front Jin** Bad Meets Evil - Eminem 110559 Kim - Eminem 1003B2 Under The Influence - Eminem 102191 Forgot About Dre - Dr Dre 100687

Fix Up Look Sharp - Dizee Rascal 121514 **Boy Bands** 116955 Westlife - Tonight 100682 Love On The Line - Blazin Squad 108150

The Hardest Word - Blue Unbreakable - Westlife Get Oown - Back Street Boys What Makes A Man - Westlife Untown Girl - Westlife

Rock

Sweet Child D Mine-Guns N Roses 101084 Letters To You - Finch 112713 Homesick - The Vines Faint - Linkin Park Rollin - Limp Bizkit 116925

### **Football Chants**

Arsenal - Vi-erra Arsenal - Amazing Reds Aston Villa - Holteenders In The Sky Aston Villa - My Old Man 110617 Aston Villa - Roll Along 122966 Blackhurn - Wild Rover 100803 Solton - Run Run 111004 Celtic - Fields of A'Ray 100381 Chelsea - Blue Is The Colour Chelsea - Super Franky Lampar 122986 Chelsea - We are the famous CFC 1229BB Everton - He was Just 17 (Rooney) 122990 Everton - You Are My Everton 122992 Leeds - We Had Joy 12299B Liverpool - You'll Never Walk Alone 123006 Liverpool - We All Live In A Red.. 12300B Man City - Blue Moon 123012 Man United - Our Trophy Back 123016 Man United - The Great Escape 123018 Middlesborough - Boro Till I Die 123024 Newcastle Utd - Blaydon Races 123026 Newcastle Utd - 1 Alan Shearer 123028 Southampton - Mr Eriksson 123034 Southampton - When The Saints

Glory Glory Spurs - We Are Tottenham Wolves - King Kenny Miller Wolves -Hey Jones 'E' There's Only One... We've Got That Double Feeling Here We Go Match Of The Day Dance

122613 Feel The Reat - Darude Silence - Nelerium We Will Survive - Warp Brothers 108003 Right Here - Fathov Slim Tocas Miracle - Fragma Thong Song- Sisgo 100041 100410

Better Of Alone - Alice Deejay Something - Lasgo Clubbed To Oeath - Rob Oougan They Oont Know - So Solid Crew 100435 Lazy - X Press Feat David Byrne Addicted To Bass - Puretone Star Guitar - Chemical Brothers U Girls Look So Sexy - Nush Nessaia - Scooter

### Christmas Tone Christmas Everyday - Wizzard Jingle Bells Merry Christmas-Slade 122964

100052 101198 Merry Little Christmas 101204 Rocking Aroung The Xmas Tree 101191 Santa Is Coming To Town 100325 We Wish You A Merry Xmas 100098 We Three Kings 101211

**TV Themes** Transformers 120553 Spooks Trigger Happy TV 102693 Jackass 102708 Malcolm In The Middle 102709 The Osbournes 102712 **Phoenix Nights** Futurama 102794 Charmed 108106 South Park Theme 108112 Itchy And Scratchy 102190 The Simpsons **Buffy The Vampire Slayer** 100681 Scooby Doo 102302

### **Movie Themes**

123D3B

123040

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123048

123052

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100338

100412

100303

100192

101019

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120811 Beetleivice 120822 Matrix Reloaded 116230 **Ghostbusters** 100665 Eve Of The Tiger - Rocky 100687 Italian Joh 100691 **Lord Of The Rings** 101158 **Austin Powers** Terminator 2 101086 Halloween 100048 James Bond 100016 **Beverly Hills Cop** 100010

Hot R N B Put Him Out - Ms Dynamite 10B007 Work It - Missy Elliott 107981 Girlfriend - Alicia Keys 107993 Dilemma - Nelly &Kelly 107901 Thug Lovin - Ja Rule 108072 You'Ve Got It Bad - Usher 101046 Hot In Herre - Nelly 102133 A Womens Worth - Alicia Keys 101220 102676 Kiss Kiss - Holly Valance 102008 Get This Party Started - Pink 101517

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Panasonic - GD87/E/ GD96 Sony - T300

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For Nokia 7650 3650 Motorola T720 Sharp Gx10 Panasonic GD87 Sony Ericsson T68 T68I T300 P800

# Bigger. Better. Smarter.







**052** Gotcha Force



SECORE 7000 95780 00650 062 Pac-Man vs.





054 Fire Emblem



Mario Golf Toadstool Tour 063







This month I've been playing...

- Mario & Luigi
- Fire Emblem
- F-Zero GX
- Judge Dredd



This month I've been playing...

- Prince of PersiaCastlevania Aria of Sorrow
- Mario & Luigi



This month I've been playing...

- True Crime
- Beyond Good & Evil
- Tiger Woods 2004



This month I've been playing...

- Mario Kart
- Viewtiful JoeMetroid Fusion
- Pokémon Pinball



This month I've been playing...

- Metroid Prime
- Shikigami no Shiro II
- Mario Advance 4

# Prince Charming Made in Canada, published by the French. It's pure video game

genius and Japan had nothing to do with it.



Don't look down! One of the great triumphs of the game is the feeling of height. Scary



The Prince moves like a ninja, but drop him off here and his bones smash into tiny bits



Finish off vanquished foes with a stab of the Dagger of Time to suck in more rewind power

# PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

t's the preview they didn't want you to read. We're not kidding – it really is. Thanks to an exclusivity deal, Prince of Persia discs will only see the inside of a PS2 in 2003 and we're supposed to pretend this doesn't exist. Tell you what, Ubisoft, you sign your pact with the devil and we'll just buy a US copy. How does that sound? Look away from the magazine.

We can't hide a game like this from you. It'd be like us ignoring Mario 128 code sat on our desk (we haven't got any by the way, so don't bother writing in). Prince of Persia is a must-have game for 2004 on GameCube and you need to know about it. Unless something goes drastically, horribly wrong between this US English-language version and our proper-speaking English-language version (it won't), you're looking at one of the very best games of next year.

Prince of Persia is exciting. Even when you're standing still in an empty room, your brain is buzzing. It's got that Indiana Jones adventure feeling flowing through it like a river and some of the most fluid controls ever. You see, the Prince is an agile chap. He does the sort



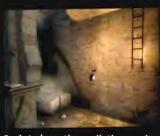
# Tight Spot Get it right, or you're dead



Righto. I need that ladder up there. But if I make any sudden moves on those perforated tiles, spikes will shoot up and ruin my feet



Tried tiptoeing and then jumping up. Didn't make it. Got impaled. So this is Plan B in action



Sprint along the wall, then, using my ninja skills, kick away from the surface at exactly the right time to catch onto the ladder



And there you go. Once the idea was there, it always looked possible. Hope I don't need to get back down...



It's like the Olympic parallel bars, only a hundred feet higher up above a spike pit



of stupid stuff Neo from The Matrix has to flip into slow motion to manage. Running along walls, fantastic feats of gymnastics, oh, and kicking eight people's asses at the same time. You're

going to love it.

The first thing you notice is how it looks. There aren't many GameCube games that can match it, actually. The crumbling palace interiors are sumptuous and every precipice you find yourself on the edge of makes for a staggering view. The man himself moves incredibly naturally, tumbling, flipping and leaping over a massive gap only to cheat death by clinging onto the target by his fingertips. The boring fact is that the lead character has over 700 different animations. This translates into him looking absolutely convincing in everything he does, which is a less boring fact.

Nothing is straightforward. Massive gaps in shattered walkways can only be traversed by running along the wall beside them. You'll often find yourself sprinting along a wall, before springing off and landing on a platform behind you. All fairly complex feats of agility, but made simple thanks to some genius



Sprint through here against the clock, dodging the spiky logs and spikier traps



When the toilet paper runs out, the Prince tries a more extreme form of anal cleansing

# "You're looking at one of the very best games of next year."



controls. You always feel in complete control. It allows you to think exciting thoughts. "I'll run up the wall there, spring back onto that pillar, leap onto that bar, and swing and flip up to that top platform". The inspiration you have to spot such an opportunity is the 'skill'. The controls let you live it out. Sometimes you die, but that's okay. You always know it's doable. Compare this with the stiff controls in the Tomb Raider games which strangled the thrill out of even the most simple jump.

So there you are, pinging about on the palace roof like a ninja squirrel. You can just about cope with barbed logs, knives and deadly spike pits doing their best to distract you. And then a bunch of bad guys appear out of thin air to punch your face in.

Well, luckily and somewhat inevitably, the boy is handy in a fight, too. Strike with the B button, evade with A. As you take on three guys, tumbling past their spear lunges and



vaulting over their backs, your mates will think you're some sort of gaming grand master. It looks brilliant, but then you need to be to triumph when heavily outnumbered in a fight. Again, it's intuitive. The only frustration is enemies constantly respawning, giving no clue as to when the fighting will end.

Sometimes, inevitably, you do get it wrong. You lose concentration in a fight and get butchered. Your route across a vicious spike pit isn't quite as perfect as you thought. That's where the Sands of Time come into it. As Prince plunges down to a grim spiky death, you squeeze 🕩 . He pauses in the air and starts flying back up on the exact trajectory you sent him down. He lands on the spot you jumped from and starts back-pedalling. You've rewound time. It's as cool as hell.

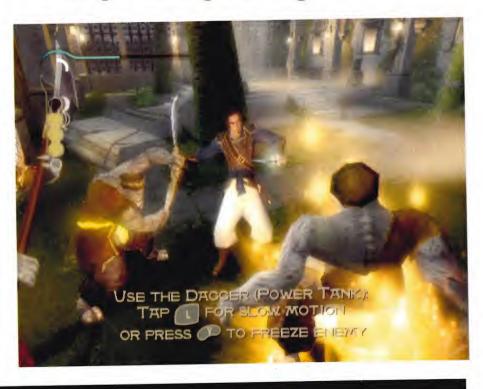
But it's not a fail-safe against dying, because you can only use iť a limiťed number of times. The power comes from the magic dagger that's the

centrepiece of the game's plot and you can only replenish its power by using it to suck the sand out of the zombie minions that populate the game. It's like a finishing move, basically. And as you progress, the dagger gives you even more power.

But the time-rewind doesn't feel like a cheap cop-out. That's the genius of the implementation. Other games might force you to restart and retread old ground, but this keeps you focused on the present, the job in hand. Not the spinning saw blades in the wall around the corner that you already ninja'd past (skillz) but solving this problem.

As well as doing dramatic sword combat and Mario-worrying platform agility, Prince of Persia also tortures your brain with its puzzles. Whole rooms full of rotating discs, gears and switches. Stuff that you genuinely have to scratch your head to figure out. The action relents and there's a calm - and usually a locked door. You're guaranteed to feel like a genius when you figure it all out. But getting down from a ledge is like a mini-puzzle in this game. Dropping down onto ledges, seeing them crumble away, spinning the camera to try and find a route through. Tapping the d-pad zooms out to a long shot, showing you the surroundings. It's a seamless pan and zoom. Trust us, it's very impressive indeed.

# "It's got that *Indiana Jones* feeling flowing through it."



### You're not stuck, genius hasn't struck yet... Always a way

Some of the most thrilling moments in the game are when you don't know what you're meant to do next. You know it's not

the kind of game to cheat you, so it's a case of thinking hard and releasing your inner games genius.



That pole must be there for a damn good reason - swingage (game logic, rule #87)



What's that glowing thing? I must need to interact with it



So if I run up the wall and back-flip, something might happen <CLUNK!>



And a giant column shoots up from the floor. Is that a ticking noise?



Run up the column and vault onto the bar before it disappears. Skillz



Flip up and off the bar and discover a walkway above. We love this game



Before you get involved with a real girl, practice your moves on an inanimate object



The water gives you health. Drink a load of it and try not to leave any gross floaters



If this doesn't make you think of Indiana Jones, you're banned from reading this magazine

Speaking of cameras, the one here does sometimes throw a bit of a fit. You're on a tight little ledge and the game decides it'd be fun if you couldn't see the edge. We also have a problem with the way the saved games work. You have to purchase a special magic carpet memory card that costs £4,000. Actually, that's not it. Another benefit of the Dagger is that it lets you see into the future after you hit a save point. You get a quick cut-scene of some of the key points in the next section. It's designed so you don't get frustrated because you can't find a way to go, but we think it wrecks the joy of discovery a bit.

But you can skip them, so we do.

It's not going to be the longest of games, either. In one amazing afternoon's play, we'd seen a good quarter of the game. We'd started to get a bit hacked off with battering rooms full of zombie guys as well. We just wanted to be back outside springing off ledges and exploring, lt doesn't even have to be anywhere relevant, just give us some ledges, a few hanging bars and an excuse to somersault – we'd be right there. Just pinging about aimlessly like a hamster in a cage. Those boys are living the dream FOR REAL. I'm pretending to be someone who can swing off bars, but hamsters can actually do it. We wonder if – from the confines of their metal prisons where they pee in their beds and never get to eat KFC – they realise just how lucky they are.

# Essentials

The developer: Ubisoft Montreal

What it's done: The equally awesome Splinter Cell, and some slightly crap F1 games Multiplayer: Sadly not, but a head-to-head obstacle race would RULE

Connectivity: Hell yeah. There are some wicked GBA bonuses

The publisher: Ubisoft Release: March 12 Review: Two issues from now

### **Predicted score**

Like the Prince at a save point, I'm having a future vision... the reviewer is going wild! Ninety-odd percent!

NOM UK **Predicts** 

game-savvy to react are always subtle

game desi need 1

to have risky

This plays so perfectl not to fall in love. It Umm, dunno really. - only Pretty sool Sands of T time and t least, ■ What, are you some kil of Persia stalker or somet Hey, I did love the original This stunni hrough

had to I was in <sup>7</sup>

GOTCHA FORCE

# ear war

battles raging on every street of your hometown. In every supermarket car good versus evil play out right under your nose. Itty-bitty robots rain thunderous firepower down upon their sworn enemies and the victors take their place in the annals

Or at least that's what Capcom wants you to think with Gotcha Force, a game full to its up to you to battle and collect palm-sized robotic buddies called Gotcha Borgs. The more of Borg minions to fight the invading meanies known as Death Force. You can also select robots from your stable and choose from many combinations of their parts – to take into multiplayer battles with you.

The basics of play are simple; take to a series of arenas and unleash the big guns to pummel your foe before they pummel you. Sometimes you'll be fighting one-on-one, while other bouts are team-based affairs, but regardless of the type of scrap one thing's certain: the action will blow a robot-shaped hole in your head.



Use simple combos to bitch-slap Death Force

ou don't know it, but there are secret park, playground and sand pit, epic battles of of miniaturised mech-fighting history.

diminutive brim with pocket-sized punch. It's Borgs you collect the better equipped you'll be when putting together your mighty army



Borgs come in all shapes – check that nurse!

# It's not what you've ... it's what you do with it!

Picture the attitude of Hollywood hooligan Vinnie Jones crossed with the awesome robotic weaponry of Transformers and you're close to understanding what Gotcha Force is like to play. The butt-kicking arsenal at your disposal is enough to take out a small country.

We've already picked out our favourite weapons and you'll soon find your best ones too as you earn more and more upgrades and unlock new, powerful Borgs.



Chain gun attack! You'd have to be mental not to covet this gorgeous gun



G-Red brings up the rear, but your ally has got the enemy covered. Bosh!



The Death Force Borgs pack some pretty meaty weaponry too so watch out

### Got an insatiable desire for awesome explosions, death and destruction? Go get Gotcha Force!

Your TV will be in danger of cracking right down the middle as your Borg runs, jumps and blasts its way to victory. Control is simple and, depending on the upgrades you've strapped on to your shiny metal ass, attacks range from simple melee combos to ranged weapons that need to recharge between volleys and the awesome 100-round rapid fire chain gun. Ka-pow!

What's most awesome is the speed of the action and the simple-yet-effective devastation kicking off all over the game area. It's easy to forget these bots are only supposed to be wee and that the on-screen supernovas are really only the size of watermelons, it's THAT explosive. Your reward for sending your enemies crashing to the ground in a mushroom cloud of pain is progress to the next arena and loads of juicy points that you



The stage is set for epic, pastel-coloured battles

# "It's the definition of what great action games should deliver."



It's so fast your puny eyes will have trouble keeping up



Are those oily tears of remorse trickling down this mech's face? We fear that's unlikely...

can splash on upgrades and recruiting brand-new Borgs to the cause.

These upgrades and new Borgs prove most effective in multiplayer games and you can save your own personalised toys of mass destruction to a memory card and challenge mates' Borgs in intense split-screen deathmatches. Modes include head-to-head play and two-on-two team battles, and with personalised robots taking part, the action can be incredible. Plus, because you've fought and trained your Borg over a series of matches, you feel a lot more connected to your multiplayer on-screen alter ego than in other deathmatch games.

With such fast-paced action on offer it's a shame that the game is let down

by some almost offensively simplistic background graphics. There are also some iffy camera-related moments, but there's plenty of time for these to be well and truly tweaked before the game's February 2004 release.

It's also interesting to note Capcom's stance in pitching this as a title for the younger end of the games market. It's simplistic for sure, but only in the same way that any form of mass destruction with rapid-fire weapons is. And the adrenaline rush from playing is the very definition of what great action games should deliver. Time will tell if it can stand up in the long term, but first impressions rock as hard as the joypad vibrations you get from the metalshredding mechanised carnage when you blast away at this baby.





# Essentials

The developer: Capcom What it's done: Resident Evil, Resident Evil 0, MegaMan Network Transmission, Capcom Vs. Multiplayer: 1-4 players Connectivity: No The publisher: Capcom Release: February 6th Review: Check out issue 137 of NOM UK

### **Predicted** score

This is fast and furious action that asks you to put your brain on hold and rely purely on your instincts. It could look nicer and it may prove repetitive in the long term but early signs are red hot.

NOM UK Predicts

everywhere as your robot stomps i tiny manga feet. It really is spectad Even if the background visuals arer particularly ground-br quite an achievement

**Are they cooler than Tr** They're cool, but also a

rewarding in its own mad-as-a-

like *TimeSplitters 2*,

At present, the camera really needs some work, especially when you launcl into the air for battles in the sky. This can easily be fixed though as there's loads of time between now and February. Unless of course the developers want time off at Christmas Only time will tell, but we'll keep an eye on the camera when we review it. player and multiplayer modes. In single-player mode you unlock new Borg parts and play through a particularly quirky story line. You can also get all Frankenstein and create new Borgs in the garage. Multiplayer is

you can wreak

the force of the grant stringe (clearly a current Capcom obsession as a very similar character appears in the PS2 title *Gregory Horror Show*). Also, we're prepared to put money on a whole host of previous Capcom games stars appearing in Borg form as rewards for your *Gotcha Force* exploits. **on or a real part of the fun?** There are two main multiplayer modes

you'd for be

it may

for admitting Well maybe y

against your creations to the to against your mates. For me, both work equally well.

there in the game and Capcom is billing it as a bit of a kids' title, but the action is

internet connection. *Gotcha Force* takes a bit of an adjustment from classic play a console multiplaye game where you can hear the w and cries of your mates as you th l'd rather



# Out of the frying pan...

You've finished Advance Wars and FFTA. You think your life is back to normal. Think again...

FIRE EMBLEM

t 9.30am, a packet arrives at NOM UK. At 9.31am a crowd gathers. It's tense. No-one knows what game's in there, but everyone wants the first go. [Rip] It's Fire Emblem for GBA! Suddenly Dom looks ill; he can't play it, he's got thumb cramps from Tiger Woods. Tim needs to go home; he's forgotten to feed his monkey. Mike pretends his GBA has caught fire and Dean fakes an aneurysm. That leaves Kingsley – but it's okay, he likes Advance Wars. It's also okay, because Fire Emblem comes from the same team that designed the GBA's war game of choice.

Fire Emblem is essentially very similar to Advance Wars. It's a turn-based strategy game with all the regular movement and combat

Arrows and different coloured squares. Who among you can fail to be thrilled by all this?

# "The RPG elements make it a much richer experience."

systems you might expect: you have knights on horseback or flying on wyverns instead of tanks and helicopters; thieves prowl around in place of reconnaissance units; spell-casters and archers are your artillery and anti-air units; horses move faster than foot soldiers, but not when it's raining; and you'll be better protected when attacking from a forest. There are also the typical 'weapon triangles'; swords beat axes, axes beat lances, lances beat swords. This works for magic, too. So, it's just Advance Wars with swords, right? Well no, not really.

Fire Emblem's main difference will either make or break the game for you –

it's got characters and a plot. Sure, Advance Wars has characters and a plot, but so does an advert for Frosties. We all know Advance Wars' Andy is good at fixing stuff; we all know Tony the Tiger likes sugar-coated pieces of flattened corn. It's the same thing. But in Fire Emblem you're so much more connected to your characters — it's them that do the fighting, not hordes of faceless units ready to die for some half-baked cause. There's a reason for every battle, other than, "the Black Hole army is invading again... because it can".

What's more, your progress is autosaved after each turn, so if a character dies, that's it. They're out of the game. You can't just churn another one out of a base. Of course, if you've got an old saved game you don't mind nipping



We told him, but he wouldn't listen – never, ever, carry a long metal pole on a stormy day



Oh, did you now? And what were we doing before I blacked out?



# aga school

Newsflash: the world of video games did not begin with you, alright?

Fire Emblem has been around for yonks. It first appeared way back in 1990 in Japan on the Famicom (NES), but despite its home-grown popularity, only the latest (seventh) edition has officially made it further than a Japanese dock worker's back pocket. And that's a real shame, because the games are cool. What's more, Fire Emblem gave birth to two Super Smash Bros. Melee characters, Marth (Fire Emblem: Ankokuryu to Hikari no Tsurugi, NES, 1990) and Roy (Fire Emblem: Fuuin no Tsurugi, GBA, 2002). So now you know.





that's basically cheating. If you want to play a role-playing game properly you have to deal with the consequences of your in-game actions, not restart every time something goes pear shaped.
You'll also miss out on all the emotion. If a

favourite character croaks, you really feel the pain – especially if some bunch of ogres have just duffed up the Paladin you've spent ages levellingup. We'd be gutted if someone drove a tank over Advance Wars' Nell, but that isn't going to happen, is it? She'd just retreat, flash her stockings at a few thousand hapless recruits and have them charging back into the napalm in a flutter of her mascarasoaked eyelashes. She's a cold, cruel lady. Other RPG elements like side-quests, magic

items, new, sharper weapons and reams and reams of dramatic text serve to muddy the water, but this is more a strategy game with a story than a true RPG. Still, the RPG elements do make it a richer experience all the same. Put it this way, while you can boot-up Advance Wars for a ten-minute tea break, this is more of a two-hour train

Just like *Advance Wars* though, there's also about three hours of training chapters that'll give you a more intensive education than most GCSEs. Which is fine if, like us, all you want to do is play handheld strategy games for a living. We'll be seeing you down the Job Centre, guys.



l've always liked you, purple-hair man. l've always thought you had the right attitude...

# favourite character croaks, you really feel the pain."

### sentials

The developer: Intelligent Systems (formerly Nintendo

What it's done: Some of the best stuff ever, including the Fire Emblem series, the Advance Wars series, Metroid Fusion (GBA), Super Metroid (Super NES) and Mario Kart Super Circuit (GBA). Wow! Multiplayer: Oh, ye Connectivity: Possibly there's a GameCube version coming soon The publisher: Nintendo Release: 2004 Review: sooner rather than later, we hope

### **Predicted** score

More limited in its appeal than Advance Wars, but possibly more griping once you get going, this should be a thing of beauty.

NOM UK **Predicts** 

enhance your skills and swap characte classes when you reach a certain level bothered to

but you'll be missing out on a

cracking yarn. If you can

especially the really hard characters weapon's and levelling-up – the t that were missing from Advance The battle animations are cool, like

■ ... and the worst bit:

There's not a whole lot of expression in the character's faces — even when they're giving you bad news they seem to be smiling. They seem to have all come from the Liz Hurley acting school. read through the five minutes of dialogue about marquises and lords before each battle, it's well worth it and will bring you closer to the characters. If you want to cut straight to the action, the Advance Wars games may be a better bet.

■ How do the ch:
it all XPs and jun!
How did you gues
played an RPG-ty!
as well as Experie
battle you can pic

■ Can I skip the dialogue and get straight to the frenzied blood-letting?

ole, but

(also on GBA), so hopefully that may reach Blighty if this one does well. Clearly the Japanese think we only want to play games where you murder people on the street, punt an air-filled leather sack around or go toe-to-toe leather sack around or go toe-to-toe with some sweaty bloke in small pants. actually a prequel to the sixth series, *Fire Emblem: Fuuin no* T 3ecause

slightly more questionable ground, but only if you give a damn what other people think. Miss out on this because it looks like something they'd sell in Cames Workshop and you'd be a fool. like the look of it, but I'm rried. Do I have to be a sad loner to was okay because it had tanks and guns in it. With Fire Emblem you're on true I love *Advance Wars* – but that Games Workshop and you'd be a fool. Still, if you're really worried, you could

I'm a big fan of stuff like *Golden Su* too, so I was always going to love t



Planetary destruction by catherine wheel - prettier, but you still kark it



With no nibbles, no Twister and no dance mat it wasn't surprising only Jade and Pey'j had turned up to the robot's birthday bash

# mile for the camera

You'll need to check in your sense of reality before you continue, things are going to get weird. Got your ticket? Let's go beyond...

ast time we showed you Beyond Good & Evil (in NOM 129) there were still leaves on the trees. We'd just got our hands on F-Zero GX for the first time and Double Dash was but a blip on the horizon. Back then we said BG&E would stand out and now we've got our hands on a finished US version we can say with authority that we were right. We said that about F-Zero. We said that about Mario Kart, too. Translation? You can trust in NOM UK.

Beyond Good & Evil is based in the fantasy world of Hyllis. You play Jade, a freelance photographer and all round good egg. Some crazy things are happening on this planet. Strange creatures, known as Domz, are attacking at will. The people fear for their lives. Protecting them from the attacks is the mysterious and aloof Alpha Section, an elite fighting force. But there are those who believe

that Alpha Section aren't all they appear and that they're actually in league with the evil Domz.

Jade and her piggy sidekick Pey'j, are hired by an underground organisation to try and uncover the secrets surrounding the Domz and Alpha Section. And that's where you come in. The twist in Beyond Good & Evil comes with the camera. In order to accumulate money Jade must collect photographs of all the living creatures on Hyllis. These can then be catalogued. The rarer the beast, the more money you'll receive. Of course this means that even when faced by a boss or mini-boss you should whip out the camera and start snapping.

But the camera's not just good for pics of small furry animals. As you delve deeper into the seedy world of Alpha Section you can use it to take snaps of top-secret stuff to send back to your colleagues, creating a file on the wrongdoings and proving their case.

The majority of the gameplay is viewed in the third person. The controls are intuitive and the game is generally fun to play. Jade has plenty of abilities; climb, run, forward roll, crouch, etc. She also has help from other characters, Pey'j being the main one. A lot of the puzzles involve teaming up with a sidekick to achieve your goal. Dual switches, blocked entries and jump pads all pop up



# "The camera is like *Metroid's* Scan Visor."



It's an emergency! But hopefully Jade will be in time to save the burning croissants and pain au chocolat

# It's a gamer's game, too

**BGGE**'s not all running around taking pictures like some crazy paparazzo – check these cool mini-games...

If you fancy a break from all of the investigative journalism then there are plenty of things you can do to entertain yourself, if you know where to look. The centre of Hyllis is home to a couple of hovercraft racetracks which are good for a laugh – not quite up to *Double Dash* standards, but fun nonetheless.

If you head into the Pedestrian District then you can find a couple of other things to entertain you. A game not unlike air hockey and a find-the-marble event are all here, and everyone's up for sticking a bet on, so there's always the opportunity to increase your wealth.



If you fancy it, hovercraft racing can be found in the centre of Hyllis



Air hockey is cool, but this is a French game – we wanted some babi-foot

# "Hyllis looks beautiful – even the ugly bits – and there are superb lighting effects."



Jade: "I'll go on ahead, you stay here and guard the truffles and swill." Pey'j: "Piece of cake <BURP>."

throughout the levels meaning you have to call on your pals to help out. But Jade isn't confined to running around, you also have the use of a hovercraft that gets you from place to place and you can enter the hovercraft into races to win extra cash and give you a break from the

intense story line. BG&E's main plus is its presentation. Hyllis looks beautiful – even the ugly bits – and there are superb lighting effects making this almost dreamlike in places. The creatures in the Abandoned Mine, near the game's beginning, are stunning and vibrant. This quality is extended through to the animation with realistic movements and idiosyncrasies given to almost every different character you come across. In places it reminded us of the classic LucasArts point-and-click adventures like Monkey Island. And that's no mean feat.

# ssentials

The developer: Ubi Soft What it's done: XIII (issue 135, 89%), Rayman 3 Hoodlum Havoc (issue 126, 87%), Rayman Advance (issue 106, 90%) Multiplayer: not here Connectivity: nothing The publisher: Ubi Soft Release: February 2004
Review: hopefully in the very next issue

### **Predicted** score

It's a wonderful title that manages to cram in great action, top characters and a smart story line without becoming dull. As long as the PAL conversion goes well, we'll be loving this long time.

I really enjoyed using the camera, especially after getting the Digital Zoom feature. It's almost like a gam itself. Every time you enter a new an you start looking for interesting the sook esticking. when you get paid the big bucks getting a shot of a really rare ani creatures to snap. It's very satisf

I don't want to say too much as it may spoil the game for you, but your first mission turns out to be an initiation test given by a group called IRIS. They firmly believe that there is more to the Alpha Section than meets the eye and they're intent on unravelling the

nands on a Gyro Disc Launcher, which

super jump to solve

... and your least favourite bit?
There's a certain element of trial a error in some of the areas, especial

when confronted by enemies. I really appreciate being jumpe gang of aliens out of the blue.

make it much more useful. Just take it

Is the hovercraft tooled up as well? collection It comes with a

at enemies, perform a super attack ar can be used in conjunction with Pey'j income and also a handy tool, a bit like the Scan Visor in *Metroid Prime*. After you receive the Digital Zoom upgrade you'll be using it to scope out places from afar without being seen. Getting **The camera's just a gimmick, isn'** Not at all. It's your main source of more, the ch – even the b

enjoyed it six months ago and I'm iking it even more now. There's so much to see and do, and so much to ake in. It's some achievement. it's got a sense of humour then?Certainly. It's not laugh-out-loud funny.



# Turtle power

The fighting foursome put two-toed foot to ass on GameCube.





# "No matter what foe you're taking on, don't worry about strategy."



Somewhere on this screen is the sound of the bad guy's glass jaw breaking. Can you spot it?

injas are cool. Whether they're mutant green turtles, giant sewer rats or crazy-ass Japanese ninjas that dress all in black, they're damn cool. They meet force with force. Pick a fight with one and you'll get a foot in the mouth. And if a ninja can't be bothered to fight, he'll lob a few spiky throwing stars instead. Sensible.

Unless you're good pals with Mr Miyagi, the closest you're likely to have got to being a ninja was when you used to pretend to be one of the Heroes In A Half-Shell, back when the Turtles were first big in the 80s. You'd run around with a bandanna tied round your eyes, screaming COWABUNGA and battering your brother with a big wooden stick. You did used to do that too, right?

After years of lying dormant, the mutant fighters are back. And with the release of the stylish animated series comes a fresh run of video games. We've already rated the GBA game, scoring a reasonable 72%, but it lost marks for being overly basic and too short.

Now we've got the GameCube version, and it looks to be mostly the same. Take on

Now we've got the GameCube version, and it looks to be mostly the same. Take on the Foot Clan with your favourite turtle or team up with a mate in the co-operative mode. A two-player Versus mode allows you to go head-to-head with another player, although we wonder why on Earth there are no four-player options when, to state the obvious, there are four Turtles.

Performance wise, all four reptiles are practically the same. They have their own combo moves and use their weapons in slightly different ways, but all perform the same function. And everything has been



Raphael, the budding archaeologist, speaks



Deal out reptile vengeance with a large stick that probably has a cool Japanese name, too

# SMEZZ-ACK!!!

Just as in XIII, the hard-hitting action has been beefed up by comic-style CRASH and POW words each time you land a merciless blow on one of your enemies' chins.

Sprint up to a gang of unsuspecting villains and launch a super-killer spinning kick — the screen will erupt everywhere with brightly coloured THOK and BASH words. Not only does it look pretty damn cool, it's almost as satisfying as it would be punching their noses and ears off.

# TMNT continues the 'SOK!' and 'THWACK!' comeback..





There's no denying this looks every bit as cool as it should – fork you, robo-dogs-things!



Leonardo finally noticed all the murdering



Those fine-tuned ninja senses are slipping

### kept extremely basic – all kicking and punching is done with single buttons that you simply batter to deal out the pain.

The environments contain breakable scenery that you can use to help you kick ass, like kicking cars until they explode, throwing shurikens at explosive barrels or smashing fire hydrants that'll knock goons to the floor with jets of water.

You'll start off tackling street mobs and move on to tougher gangs and the Foot in later levels. But no matter what foe you take on, you don't have to worry about strategy. They all fight in exactly the same way, so you can just run in smashing the buttons. More moves can be unlocked as you progress through the game, but it all still seems a bit too basic.

Making your way through the levels is just like a classic scrolling beat-'em-up – you take on waves of enemy fighters until they're all defeated in that area. An arrow will flash up on the screen, signalling you to move on to the next area where more fighting awaits.

Fans will be glad to see clips of cartoon footage to kick off levels and brief cut-scenes that unravel the action of the stage ahead. You'll start off fighting in the sewers and streets, and later move onto warehouses and Foot Clan bases – areas you may have seen in the cartoon. But none are very exciting.

Just like on GBA, everything is basic. Anyone can pick up the pad and have a good ruck without the need for gaming skill. That's great for really young fans of the cartoon series, but for hardcore Nintendo gamers like yourself, we're not so sure.

### Essentials

The developer: Konami What it's done: Disney Sports Basketball (issue 129, 38%), Disney Sports Football (issue 123, 73%), Disney Sports Skateboarding (issue

128, 40%)
Multiplayer: 1-2 players
Connectivity: Disconnected
The publisher: Konami
Release: February 2004
Review: Issue 139 or so...

### **Predicted score**

We all wanted to like this game because it's the *Turtles*, but we haven't seen anything yet to make this good. It's not bad, but we doubt it'll have *Turtles* fans busting veins in anticipation.

NOM UK Predicts

worry about this because if you do it

both just charge in to each other hitting the attack button, or any moves that you've been taught i What about the Versus mo ■ What about the fighting system? The System? The both just charge

scenery, have a nice cartoony lool game, including characters and used in XIII. All of the 3D like the comic when you lay '

■ ... and the worst bit?
Being smashed to the floor by an attacking opponent and not being it o do a thing about it. There's no bly button, so if one of the goons charg

bowling ball hitting pins.

nowhere, like they've been beamed in from the Starship Enterprise. When you first spot a gang in the distance, they as if they were paralysed until you run up to them. Once they actually engage all, they sometimes just appear out of won't actually react to your presence. They'll just stand there and look at yot The enemies are a bit strange. First of

fun. After a while I got bored jumping onto other platforms now and then is your thing. Mostly it's a pretty dull string of button bashing. You'll ised that was because I wanted to the repetitive gameplay

ass ninjas and their new in the cartoon rocks. As f

# Play your cards right

Freed from its card-playing roots, Yu-Gi-Oh! comes to GameCube dressed in RPG clothes.

or a game that's built its reputation on avidly collecting and scrutinising a deck of cards, Yu-Gi-Oh! The Falsebound Kingdom does a pretty decent job of disguising that fact altogether. What we have here is a turn-based role-playing game mixed with the strategic elements of Advance Wars.

Being the all-round deck don that he is, Yugi has received an invitation to SCI Laboratories to try out some new Duel Monsters software that's being developed. And being the spiky-haired good guy that we all know and love, the little chap's brought all of his friends along to take a look as well.

SCI are in the process of developing a piece

of virtual reality equipment that allows you to enter the Duel Monsters world and join a rebellion against an evil empire, battling the oppressors with a small army of sympathetic monsters that have rallied to your cause.

Of course, when the machine is turned on and Yugi and his mates take up their positions, they are magically warped into the world where they actually become leaders of the various rebellion groups and must fight their way out of the game. You can choose to play as either Yugi or Seto Kaiba. Both characters have much the same

YU-GI-OH! THE FALSEBOUND KINGDOM

experience in the virtual world so the choice is really down to your personal preference. We opted for Yugi

Your initial forays into the battle are guided by Shimon, a member of the rebellion. He explains the basics of the game to you, from selecting your squad to taking over weak and abandoned sites on the map in order to give your team extra assistance as you battle through the levels.

This is where the Advance Wars side of things kicks in Your initial task is usually to find a weak or empty base and take it over in order to gain a foothold in the arena. Then you can use any gold that you have accumulated to fortify your site, building air and ground defences, healing centres and more.

Once you've taken out the weaker opponents you then have to take out the boss, win the area and move on to the next. Sadly the battles are dull. Each Marshal controls three monsters chosen before the map is activated and then takes turns to unleash the various attacks possessed by your creatures. For the most part your monsters only have one attack, so the system boils down to hitting two butťons and watching the not-so-spectacular animations unfold on screen.

Rather than being a fight to the death, you only have a set number of turns in which to defeat your opponents. The winner in each scenario is the player





## "There's little to satisfy hardcore **Yu-Gi-Oh!** fans or RPG addicts."



With big monsters and flashing lights, who needs decent gameplay underneath? YOU DO!







It's great seeing all your monsters in full 3D...

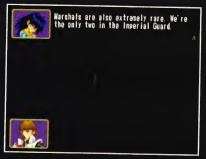


... but that's about all Falsebound has got

If you were hoping to see some cool *Yu-Gi-Oh!* cut-scenes then you'll be sorely disappointed here, friends.

We could cut The Falsebound Kingdom a little slack if there were some sweet animated sequences in there, even some 2D comic strip type things. But what do we get? Text, text and more text.

Usually there's a static image illustrating the conversation, but is that enough for slavering Yu-Gi-Oh! fans? We don't think so. In fact, we reckon it whiffs of 'cash in'. Sort it out Konami, there's so much source material to borrow from and yet we have to make do with a GameCube comic - and not a very exciting one at that.





who's done the most damage to their opponent. Once the turns have ended you return to the map screen where you have to be quick to stop your Marshal

re-entering the battle. You then have the chance to get your character back to full health or send in another Marshal.

The Falsebound Kingdom feels lazy, it looks dated and there seems to be very little in here to satisfy either hardcore Yu-Gi-Oh! fans or obsessive RPG addicts. Hopefully things will be tweaked and extras bunged in for the European release, otherwise this has 'cash in' written all over it.



Look at the many different stats and icons. Laugh as grown men weep in confusion

# Essentials

The developer: Konami What it's done: ZOE: The Fist of Mars (GBA, issue 116. 82%), Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories (GBC, issue 124, 64%), Yu-Gi-Oh! Stairway to the Destined Duel (GBA, issue 129, 71%)

Multiplayer: No Connectivity: Not on your nelly, mate The publisher: Konami

Release: TBC Review: Sometime next year

### Predicted score

No doubt The Falsebound Kingdom will be snapped up by Yu-Gi-Oh! fans the minute it hits shops, but unless you live and breathe Yugi, we reckon this'll disappoint. It needs more of the depth and excitement we'd expect from a big franchise.

NOM UK Predicts

globe. The Falsebound Kingdom just doesn't have the depth that's expected from both hardcore Yu-Gi-Oh! fans and die-hard RPG players.

Yu-Gi-Oh! Is the best thing in the

this had been produced as some

Everyone in the office agrees that it's least with uninspiring the

the presentation. Zog and Pritgip then everybody woulk be quick to dismiss it. Slap on the Yu-Gi-Oh! name and you've got yourself an instant hit. world, you won't convince me that this is rubbish. That's what Konami are betting on. original RPG with characters called

■ Yu-Gi-Oh! is the worst thing in the world, but I really want a 'Cube RPG. Symphonia is released this side of the Look away now and hope with all heart that something like *Tales of* 

sad fact is that all interaction in between the battles is conducted through reams of text and static pictures of the characters. The closest you get to animation or emotion is an exclamation mark!

army of beasts and it's always nice

an idea of the size and scale of

get an idea of the size and : some of the monsters, just

Pokémon Stadium or Colosseum

■ Can you find a best bit? Over time, you can accumulate an

It can't all be bad though

No it can't and this is certainly the closest that GameCube has come to an Advance Wars-type game, which is good to see. But it's a real shame that the licence hasn't been used to the full and the game engine is basic at best. This is not using GameCube's power all, it could all be done on GBA.

graphics are poor, there are no animated cut-scenes, the music doesr

action and prolonging the agony. graphics are poor, there are no

along at a snail's pace breaking up

dated and cheap. Thin

... and a worst bit?

it the action and the gam h. Take off the *Yu-Gi-Oh!* this goes straight in the l

to fit

name and

You'd think so wouldn't you, but the

part N64, part PSone and part GBA. The graphics are particularly lacklustre terrain and no real detail in any area of But it must have some cool Yu-Gi-

ut there we hope this gets a lot before it's released in Europe. ittle resemblance to the cartoon ser game. It feels rushed, as What a disappointment. This bears or the card

### PAC-MAN VS.

intendo's E3 2003 press conference featured a ground-breaking event in video game history. Shigeru Miyamoto announced that he had something special to show off and it wasn't Mario 128. He introduced Pac-Man creator Toru lwatani and announced that they had worked together to design Pac-Man vs. for GameCube. This was amazing since it was the first game Iwatani had worked on for over 20 years – he'd quit designing in protest after Namco awarded him a piddling £2,000 bonus after his creation made them millions.

Miyamoto, meanwhile, had always thought of Toru Iwatani the way most people think of, well, Shigeru Miyamoto – Iwatani was his personal industry idol, the creator of his favourite game. Miyamoto loved Pac-Man so much that when he began to experiment with GBA connectivity, he fashioned a multiplayer Pac-Man game on his own, bringing the prototype to Iwatani at Namco and asking him to help out. What's it like? Well, for the one

guy holding the GBA, Pac-Man vs. ľoóks exactľy like a standard game of Pac-Man: yellow circle with a



# It's party time! Bring a four Pac

It's four-player Pac-Man with GBA connectivity. And it's probably gonna be free. Be calm, people.



The three ghosts play on the TV, unable to see exactly where Pac-Man is, but working together in the hunt

mouth, dots, fruit, ghosts and four tempting Power Pellets. But the ghosts aren't being controlled by the computer. They're being moved around by something much more devious – the people sat next to you.

Yes, while you're staring at the GBA, your three friends are watching the TV screen, where they can only see their ghosts and about a five-dot radius around them. To eat your little Pac-Man before he clears the board, they'll have to co-ordinate their efforts by yelling out where you are and trying to trap you. It's actually more of a competition between the ghosts, however, as only the ghost that catches Pac-

SCORE 7000 LAYER 1 03530 PLAYER 00730 PLAYER 3 00000 PLAYER 4 00000 This is what you see on the GBA

Man gets a share of his points. Then the GBA passes over to that player and they're Pac-Man for the next round. Play continues until somebody reaches a predetermined number of points.

The controller-passing between rounds can get slightly confusing, but the game always knows who has got which controller. That doesn't keep the wires from getting tangled, though. One solution would have been support for four GBAs, but that's not in there. You can already see that the fun is potentially limited, which is why the game will likely be given away FREE with Namco's *R-Racing Evolution*.



### **Essentials**

The developers: Namco and Nintendo What they've done: Super Mario Bros., Pac-Man, all the awesome stuff. **Multiplayer:** 2-4 players **Connectivity:** IS THE WHOLE POINT, YOU FOOL The publisher: Namco Release: TBC Review: TBC

### **Predicted score**

It's a mini-game that won't even be sold separately, but it's way more fun than Pac-Man World 2, not to mention almost every other party game you could mention.

NOM UK Redicts 800/0+

# econd rou

f you sit in a Tiger Woods tower, worshipping at the altar of the greatest golfer of the modern era then be warned; you just aren't going to get this at all. Now that we've dug as deep as we can into Mario Golf Toadstool Tour we're absolutely certain that this is the sort of game you'll either love or hate.

In its favour, Mario Golf is pure fun, devoid of any complications or fuss. You don't have to worry about the clubs in your bag, winning a sponsorship deal from Callaway or desperately trying to make the cut on a four-day PGA Tour round. It's a safe, self-contained version of the sport. There's variety in the players' skills, but it boils down to getting out onto the course and having a bit of a laugh.

On the downside, it feels old-fashioned. Since the invention of the analogue swing system in most new golf titles, the button-pushing approach feels like a backwards step. A bit like a Game Boy Advance game. But if you've cut your teeth on the N64 and Game Boy Color versions of Mario Golf then you'll easily adapt.

What's undeniably cool though – cooler than all the Retief Goosen's and Colin Montgomerys you'd care to mention – is the cast list. We were reasonably happy with Mario, Yoshi and Donkey

MARIO GOLF TOADSTOOL TOUR

We've unlocked the lot, just for you. Come take a peek...



# "Mario Golf is pure fun, devoid of any complications or fuss."

Kong, but dig a little deeper – and play a little better and you'll get your hands on such luminaries as Boo and Petey Piranha.

And as is the fashion, the best is saved until last. Bowser's Badlands is a truly fiendish course filled to bursting with lava pits and Bullet Bills. This is Nintendo escapism at its very best. But for many, this is just going to be too much of an acquired taste.





Look at all the characters we've unlocked - it was tough, but we did it for you





# Essentials

The developer: Camelot What it's done: Golden Sun: The Lost Age (GBA, issue 132, 89%), Golden Sun (GBA, issue 114, 93%), Mario Golf (N64, issue 85, 90%) Multiplayer: 1-4 players, taking turns

Connectivity: yes, but we still haven't tried it yet
The publisher: Nintendo Release: TBC

Review: with any luck it'll be in a few issues' time

### **Predicted score**

If old-skool golf is your thing and you think the analogue swing is the work of the devil, then this is going to be right up your street. But if Tiger's your man then this is going to feel too light to be any real fun.

NOM UK Predicts



# F-Zero GX gets smaller

New and improved, F-Zero: Falcon Legend will give you finger blisters and a brain ache.

atch someone when they're playing the hardest Cup in an F-Zero game their eyes are wide open and glued to the TV as their brain struggles to absorb the supersonic action on screen. Their pupils twitch psychotically and their head moves, ducking left and right slightly as they guide their ship around one rapid bend after another, scraping walls at 1,400km/h.

It's like mental punishment. Forget burning eyes, you'll walk away from playing the Diamond Cup in F-Zero GX with a brain meltdown. No game can do this to a gamer like F-Zero and the GBA will be getting its second serving of cranium-aching action with the sequel to Maximum Velocity.

Visually, you'd need a keen eye to tell the

difference between Falcon Legend and its portable predecessor, but there have been some huge changes to the gameplay. Now, everything from game modes and ship set-up to the race grid line-up and boosting method is more like the N64 and GameCube versions rather than the Super NES original.

The Super NES version and Maximum Velocity gave players one boost per lap. This limiting system has been replaced by the improved GameCube-style power/boost bar. Boosting takes away health, but you can boost as much as you like, providing you keep your Power topped up.

The ship-select screen has been

F-ZERO: J' FALCON LEGEND

updated, so there are now 30 players to choose from – a massive increase on Maximum Velocity and each can be set up for speed or acceleration in the same way as in GX. So you'll now have to toy around with your ship settings to get the best result out on the track.

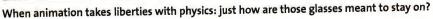
There are also 30 competitors in an Arcade race, not four. But don't expect the same crowded racing conditions as F-Zero GX – the other ships race at a distance from each other and you'll just compete with the pack closest to you. This means you won't ever have more than about five racers on-screen at once. This is a bit of a downer, but at least they're there. More is generally better than less. Unless you're talking about more copies of Universal Studios for Christmas.











# he new and the old

As well as all the familiar tracks like Mute City and Big Blue, Falcon Legend also has neat 2D versions of some of the tracks that were new in *GX*. The most impressive is the Lightning course. The track is made of a red mesh and you can see through it as you pelt along — and there's even cracks of lightning, too. Impressive for a 2D racer. Now all we need is a straight port of Super Mario Kart on GBA...





# lf it were any faster, we doubt you'd be able to see the corners,



Driving along the edge of a licorice allsort



Dude, you're not Batman. Lose the mask

# **Essentials**

But best of all the additions is Story mode. Again, in a similar way to GX, you are placed in various scenarios in story-driven races. As well as Captain story-driven races. As well as Captain Falcon, there are seven other racers that can be chosen, each with their own story lines. Unfortunately, Japanese text denies us the opportunity of understanding what's going on, but this is likely to be where the game ties in with the cartoon. It seems to be ultra sweet, though.

Basic but cool action sequences set the scene for the race before you're given an objective and dumped on the racetrack. The challenges are neat dumped on the racetrack. The challenges are neat – you'll be asked to catch up and beat a fast opponent to the finish line, win a race on a tight course without boosting, or even get to the end of a course without being overtaken by your rival. They're inventive to say the least.

Our only problem with F-Zero Falcon Legend is it seems a little on the easy side. Either that, or the many hours we spent rocketing round in GX the many nours we spent rocketing round in OX have give us the reactions of a super-fly, because we stormed through most of the Story mode missions on our first try and we destroyed the Gold Cup on Expert mode without too many problems either. We expect there'll be a tougher difficulty cotting to unlock which should be more difficulty setting to unlock, which should be more of a challenge, but all will be told in our review when the game arrives on UK shores.

The developer: Nintendo What it's done: F-Zero GX (issue 133, 92%), F-Zero . Maximum Velocity (issue 106, 91%)

Multiplayer: 1-4 players, single and multi-cart Connectivity: nothing revealed... yet. But keep your fingers crossed

The publisher: Nintendo

Release: TBC Review: make it English, Nintendo... HURRY!

### **Predicted score**

More F-Zero? Our eyes can't take much more. But then, with all the neat updates in this, we won't be complaining. Bring it!

NOM UK **Predicts** 

nave many alternative routes that you'll guickest way. *Falcon Legend* also has the oiggest jumps you've ever seen in a 2D hey are far from boring. Most of them and corkscrews, the tracks are boring? racing game and some of the courses nave no barrier either, not to mention umour that all of the tracks from the Does that mean that without loops ice and mud patches, explosive mines Super NES original are unlockable too We can't confirm that now, but you'll Not at all. The tracks may be flat, but need to experiment with to find the and fog. We've also read an internet cnow as soon as we do.



it when they were young. They'll have a the OAPs and tell which of them played permanent twitch in their eyes, thumbs hat look like leather and the reactions I've played too much F-Zero already. In 60 years time you'll be able to look at

of a Shaolin warrior on steroids

### rate and it's more than quick enough 2D scenery nips past at a very hasty be able to see the corners in time to couldn't possibly compete with the asked - does Falcon Legend feel as It's the question that's got to be must remember, it's only in 2D. It hyper-advanced graphics of the nsanely fast as GX?

No, but then is that really possible? The to give you the same wide-eyed glare of concentration while you play it. But you GameCube racing god. And with those simple but effective Mode 7 graphics, if it were to go any faster we doubt you'd negotiate them.

### know you'll rock to them, if you like that N64 version. That may disappoint some there that you won't recognise, but the boys again. Ānyway, even if you've only nut, I loved F-Zero X so for me, it was a great nostalgic treat to hear those bad ■ The other thing that's always noted people, but not me. Being a Nintendo majority are exactly the same as the about F-Zero games is their rocking There are a few funky new tunes in tunes will be quite familiar and we ever played F-Zero GX, most of the soundtracks. Always new, but still familiar to fans. Is this the same? sort of thing.

was just another Super NES-type F-Zero Unfortunately, Falcon Legend seemed a The addition of all the more up-to-date features in the *F-Zero* series. We would sequel, but the new boosting and ship bit easier than we expected. Once we have been really disappointed if this set-up sits well in the portable racer. unlock all of the (possible) extra ■ ... and the worst bit?

■ What's the best bit?

far won't be too much of a challenge for know more, but what we've played so difficulty settings and courses, we'll

Get some seasonal cheer and check out our Christmas greetings from *Animal Crossing...* 





Damn! I'll try and put a brave face on it. Look at my cool Master Sword.









Time to get the Christmas shopping in at Tom Nook's.







Christmas Eve. I forgot the Twiglets, so it's back to Tom... ah, crap! Closed!



your town is worth 500 Bells a piece. Get that fruit and





Never mind, I'll cheer myself up by nicking the lights off Maddie's tree.







Amazing - the Post Office is still open. I bet I get a warm welcome...





Hey, Santal Drop the sack or it's spade meets face time for you.



PID YOU KNOW? Animal Crossing has Animal Crossing has feng shui. Arrange feng shui. Arrange feng shui. Arrange for shuil has and good luck and good luck and



Just look at all this snow! It's a white winter! How romantic!



Come on, Jingle old son, play the game. Less talk more presents.







I'm the luckiest reindeer in the whole, wide world! Ho ho ho!



You're just not going to quit are you? Anyone for some tasty venison?





ah, what a nice message from the GameCube.



there any more magical e than the holidays? ink not! Flurries drifting through the frosty night air, footsteps crunching through snow, family gatherings... Have you been good? 💛



If family gatherings are so great how come you never visit? [sob]



### DID YOU KNOW?

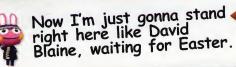
One day, a flashy giraffe called Gracie turned up and asked us to clean her car. We told her to scram.



Hey, if I make this snowball big enough maybe it'll crush Maddie.









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# What the Hell is that!?



A NOM UK special: the Nintendo hardware you've never even heard of...

By Chris Kohler

# Hardware Feature

### **ELE-CONGA** (¥9,800; 1972)

Donkey Konga might seem like unexplored territory for Ninty, but its conga roots go back over 30 years to a hip-shakin' invention of Gunpei Yokoi's. The ingenious engineer who had designed Nintendo's first electronic toys, the Beam Gun games, now turned his attention to the samba music craze that was sweeping Japan. Ele-Conga sounds and looks like a toy, but it seems to have been designed as a serious musical instrument. Five buttons atop the drum's face make high-quality beats, which output through a standard line out jack on the side

of the highquality barrel. For the less-thanmusically inclined, an optional ¥1,200 attachment played drum beats automatically using a paper disc reader.



Nintendo

### Color TV Game 6/ Color TV Game 15

(¥9,800 and ¥15,000; 1977)

In an unpublished segment of our exclusive interview with Shigeru Miyamoto two months ago, the grand master had one thing to say about Nintendo's first attempts at

designing game hardware: "They were bad!" The machines' insides were licensed from the American company Magnavox and played simple Pong-like games. The colour graphics were a key selling point since none of the Japanese machines at the time had them and the price was cheaper as well. The machines were a huge hit, selling a combined million units and placing Nintendo firmly into the video game business.





### 4 . . .

### Family Computer Robot (R.O.B) (1985)



Robotic
Operating Buddy
– or R.O.B. for
short – is
destined to live
on in the hearts
and minds of
American
children of the
80s. After the
video game
industry crash of
1983, no toy
store manager in

his right mind would stock anything called a 'video game'. But a robot game, now that was something different! And so Nintendo took the Family Computer Robot — a gimmick toy that 'read' on-screen commands and moved around like

molasses in January – and packed him in with the NES in 1985. He was loved for a brief period of time until kids realised there were only two R.O.B. games – Gyromite and Stack-Up – and that they stunk compared to good ol' Super Mario, even though Mario used the outdated 'joystick' controllers. R.O.B. remains at



icon of 80s nostalgia, however, even making a guest

### Satellaview (1995)

By the time it released its 16-bit Super Famicom in 1990, Nintendo was rather averse to any experimental hardware. Still, it wasn't quite ready to give up on online, or some form of it anyway. Partnering with long-time buddies Bandai, Nintendo released the Satellaview, an





add-on that
attached to the
bottom of the Super
Famicom and
received data from
the popular BS
satellite television
network (satellite,
not cable, had
caught on in Japan).
There were

downloadable games that featured online competitive play like Mario Excitebike, and exclusive one-player games that could be downloaded and saved to a blank cartridge—like the little-known Radical Dreamers, the sequel to Chrono Trigger.

#### **Racing 112 and Blockbuster**

(¥12,500 and ¥13,500; 1978 and 1979)

Miyamoto's very first job at Nintendo was to design the outer hardware casings for these two systems. Racing 112 played a variety of driving games and Miyamoto was

adamant that it should have a life-size steering wheel and gear shift. Two-player games were controlled with identical paddles that extended from the system and were stored in the back when not in use. You can see more Miyamoto design genius in the casing



for Blockbuster, which played variants of the classic arcade game Breakout. First, note that the switches are labelled with intuitive pictures rather than text. And furthermore, Miyamoto designed this system to be playable by either right-handed or left-handed players, simply by turning it around.



#### **Famicom and Disk System**

(¥14,800 and ¥15,000; 1983 and 1986)



when it decided to bring those hits back home, its solution was a gem. We don't have to tell you what a landmark system the Famicom was (or point out how much cooler the Japanese design is). But did you know that most of Nintendo's major franchises began their life on a different piece of hardware altogether? We're referring, of course, to the Famicom Disk System, which ran Famicom games on little yellow floppy disks. The disk were rewriteable, which means that when you got tired of a game you could have a new one written onto the disk for as little as ¥500! within a year – mostly because cartridge sizes soon outgrew the 1Mbit disks – but in that year, classics like *Zelda*, *Super Mario* 2, *Metroid* and *Kid Icarus* made their debut on disk.



#### **Virtual Boy** (¥15,000; 1995)

probably didn't get your heart rate up. Indeed, with the possible exception of the Disk System, none of those systems are that much fun today. But the Virtual Boy is and we'll admit to having a little bright-red spot in our hearts for this much-maligned hardware.

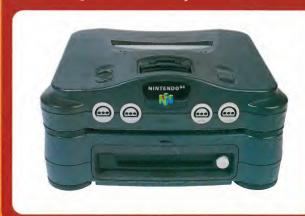
for this much-maligned hardware. The final Nintendo hardware created by Yokoi, the Virtual Boy tapped into the mid-90s virtual-reality craze by creating a pseudo-3D display screen, in red LED lights, inside of a nifty little visor. Games like *Mario's Tennis* and *Wario Land* showed that the 3D imagery was more like a graphical trick than a real addition to the gameplay, but the effect was just as intriguing as those Magic Eye drawings. Not to mention the fact that many of the games were fun and the hardware design is still eye-catching. Virtual Boy, we salute you!





#### 64DD (¥30,000; 1999)

The 64DD. Whoops. Perhaps the most impressive thing about this magnetic-disk add-on to the N64 is that Nintendo actually released it. Most of the people who bought the 64DD did so through Randnet, a Nintendobacked online service. Yes, that's right – the N64 was online too, but not for long. There was even an ultra-rare N64 keyboard. The 64DD is notable for the few cult classic games that were released for it. Most of the projects were either bumped back to the N64 or forward to the GameCube, including Doshin the Giant, Mario Artist (parts of which will be used in Stage Debut), and Zelda: Ocarina of Time Master Quest. 64DDs currently sell for about £200.



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#### **Scores and Awards**

90+ 85-89

80-84

70-79

50-59

40-49

30-39

0-29

A Nintendo classic **Exceptional in its class** Great fun, but not ground-breaking Some nice ideas, but lacks Nintendo magic Few classic moments, for die-hards only Been there, seen it, played it. Yawn! No ideas, no gameplay, no way

Not worth buying Not worth stealing



POISON

A real minger that might give you a bad disease just by touching it. Like Universal Studios.



SUPERSTAR

We'll dish these out each issue to the best games, regardless of whether they're on GameCube or GBA.







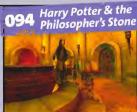
100 Judge Dredd: Dredd vs Death















Medal of Honor: Rising Sun

















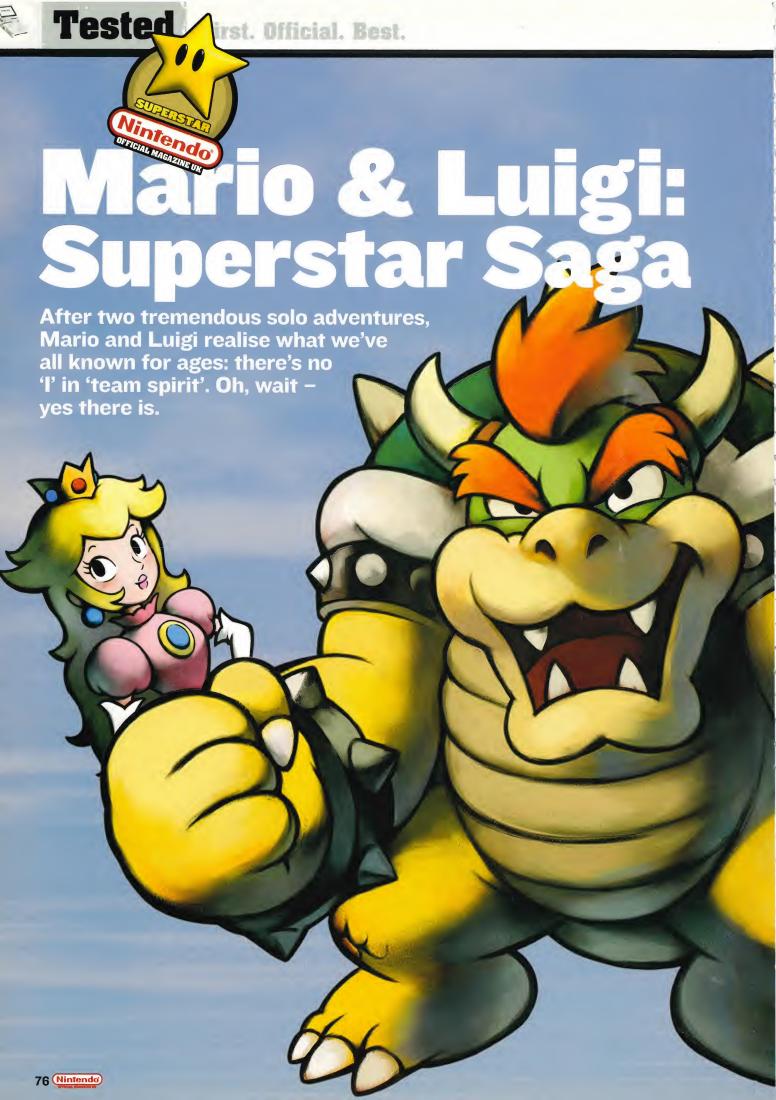


















#### Game info Out Price: £29.99 Now Publisher: Nintendo Web: www.nintendo.co.uk Players: 1-2

Brothers are a strange breed. They spend their entire childhood fighting over trivial things, yet this somehow manages to strengthen their relationship as adults. Best friends and girlfriends come and go, but brothers are for

life. Well, until Luigi's solo mission in the mansion. And Mario's lone ramble on Isle Delfino. It's okay though, the team is back. And the brothers are gonna work it out.

The wise among you will remember the N64's awesome *Paper Mario* and may well have heard





of its NTSC-only Super NES predecessor, Super Mario RPG. Both were satisfyingly crunchy twists on the standard RPG formula - in addition to puzzle-solving, numbercrunching, stat-juggling brain power, you needed action gameplay skills. Remember in our interview with Miyamoto back in NOM UK 133, where he confessed a "fundamental dislike of the RPG system"? Super Mario RPG, developed in conjunction with Squaresoft, featured a battle system that required timed hits for big damage and maps that featured platform-jumping fun. Paper Mario on the N64 put more emphasis on the timing aspect, but what both games most sorely lacked was more input from a greenhatted bloke named Luigi.

No more. Not only is Luigi a playable character in Mario &

Luigi: Superstar Saga, he's vital to the mission at hand. Whereas most RPGs just have you moving your characters up, down, left and right on static, 2D maps, Mario and Luigi must jump, spin and swim their way around the Beanbean Kingdom, a land on the outskirts of Mushroom country. As things get started, all you need to do is use the **(A)** and **(B)** buttons to make Mario and Luigi jump. You can switch who walks in front with the 🚯 button. Soon you'll learn to combine your jumping powers — put Luigi in the back and press 📭 and he'll switch to the High Jump. Press B and he'll hop on top

of Mario and bounce them both up to higher levels. Do the same thing with Mario and he'll do a Sunshine-styled Spin Jump that will carry them across great distances.

But it doesn't stop there, oh no. You'll learn to toss fireballs Mario can use them to start fires or toss them onto Luigi, causing them both to run at full speed in the opposite direction. Not to be outdone, Luigi gets the power of thunder, which of course causes critical hits on waterdwelling enemies. Later you'll get Hammers, which you can not only use to crack rocks or stun enemies, but also crack your brother on the head

with them. If Mario bashes Luigi on the noggin with the Hammer, he pounds him into the ground where he can walk underneath grates and dig up special items.

As you collect these powers, they apply to battles as well. In fact, judicious use of your moves on the map screen will give you an advantage before you even enter battle. You can see all the enemies moving about on the map and if you can jump on them, they'll start the battle with damage. If you whap them with a Hammer on the map screen, they'll start the battle stunned. Once you get in there you can make the Bros. jump

#### "It should have a warning that says, 'Boredom not included. Contains awesomeness'."



■ What is this? An issue of Woman's Weekly?! Let's get on with the jumping on reptiles!



#### What's the story?

What's occurring at Mushroom Castle.

■ A long time ago, in a kingdom far, far away, an unexpected guest arrives at the gates of Mushroom Castle. She claims to bring gifts from the heir of the Beanbean Kingdom, but turns out to be an evil, green-faced witch-monster who steals poor Princess Toadstool's lovely voice and swaps her dulcet tones for crazy explosive curse words. They're cool, but it still bites for Peach.

Mario and Luigi hop on Bowser's ship as the three temporarily team up to save her poor vocal cords... anyway, that's just the prologue and like all great RPG stories, Mario & Luigi Superstar Saga takes lots of unexpected twists and turns before it's all over. What's more, you'll laugh your head off at some of the developments.



■ It's all gone wrong for Peach, but the Toads are still smiling. Bless



■ But now it becomes clear – that nasty old bag is trouble



... but those exploding words are too cool! Dammit!



at any time using ② and ③ again – with proper timing, you can dodge enemy attacks and take no damage. Of course, if you can jump on your enemies instead of over them, you can do more damage via a counterattack. And if you jump on an attacking Koopa Troopa, you can kick the Shell at other enemies on the screen.

On the attack, Mario and Luigi can either fight separately (again, hitting the button with perfect timing to do double damage) or use a Bros. attack. The first time you use one of these special power moves, you'll want to set it to Level 1. On Level 1 the action will slow down so you can learn the button-press timing. With Level 2 there's no slowdown, but the attack does more damage.

The attacks do even more damage on Level 3 and cost more Bros. Points to cast, but must be performed entirely from memory. The difference is huge, though – Mario's Fire Bros. attack does about seven times more damage on Level 3 with perfect timing.

Oh, and what happens when Mario gets hit with the Hammer? If Mario gets hit, he'll shrink down to tiny Mario, who can walk through miniature doors – and whose jumping sounds just like mini-Mario's jumps from Super Mario Bros. 1. In fact, those kind of references to past Mario games are what makes Superstar Saga such a treat for lifelong fans of the red-capped hero. From the very first scene to the final climactic showdown with you-knowwho, you'll be pointing your

fingers (and smudging up the GBA screen) every time you see something that's clearly a sly reference to a past adventure. Kudos to developers Alpha Dream for being such Mario fans and equal credit to the translators for making sure nothing got lost in, well, translation.

Speaking of the English translation, Superstar Saga might very well be the funniest (intentionally funny, not bad-funny) RPG we've ever played. Picture this: Mario and Luigi enter a coffee shop in the castle town and trade in some beans to brew a special blend. The shop's owner shows up, and it's Professor E.Gadd from Luigi's Mansion! He drinks the coffee and has a terrible reaction, desperately needing to use the bathroom, but the Koopa Troopa working the

counter reminds his boss that he was too cheap to build toilets in the place. So Luigi runs and gets his trusty ghost vacuum, which he points at the old man's ass. Fade out.

Add to scenes like this a bevy of humourous asides and goofy facial expressions, and *Mario & Luigi* might just be the first Game Boy Advance game to have you laughing out loud and snorting Diet Coke out of your nose in the most inappropriate of places. The guy sitting next to you on the tube will think you've lost it. The little girl on the park bench in front of you will run away screaming. And your friends will say, "I thought you said you were playing an RPG?" And you ARE playing an RPG, through and through... but *Mario* & *Luigi* is so much more. Chris Kohler

#### Like peas and carrots

Mario and Luigi go together like ramalamalama ka dingididingdidong



■ If they spin into a whirlpool the Bros. can fly off further and longer



■ If they hop on Bike Blocks like these they can pedal all the way to victory



■ And if they... uh... what the hell? Get a room, guys – that's disgusting

## "Mario & Luigi might be the first GBA game to have you laughing out loud."



■ Clearly Mario can carry off a hammer, but Luigi always looks camp

Bowser Baddies!

Bowser Baddies!

He knows I can't jump way over there, so he always runs off that way!!! REAL MATURE, JERK!

So you get to shoot water at the artsy bombs again! Isn't it just so fun you could dye?!?

It's not right taking advantage of a cripple. Go get 'im boys!

■ 'Dye'? 'DYE'?! Oh, yeah, we get it! There are loads of cool mini-games









■ You'd have thought Mazza would be ready for that one by now...

#### Mini-games galore

ere's more to this than levelling-up, kiddo

■ Here are just two of the dozens of addictive mini-games you'll encounter in Superstar Saga. Left: before you can leave the Mushroom Kingdom, the Hammer Bros. border patrol challenges you to a deadly game of jump-rope. Right: an old bean (literally, he really is a bean) teaches Mario and Luigi how to navigate these dual mine carts and collect diamonds.



■ Jumping over this rope seems simple, but you'll learn to control the boys better



■ Just like the monkey rule, all truly great games also feature mine carts



#### Yes if...

You like RPGs... or you would if they weren't so slow-paced.

#### No if...

You prefer your RPGs to be entirely free of action sequences.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Paper Mario, comedy and sly, knowing references to past Mario adventures.

#### **GRAPHICS**

Very stylish, evoking a cel-shaded feel, but the GBA can do better.

#### SOUND

A mix of new tunes and updated classics - some that you might not expect.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

10

Every time you think they've run out of ideas, they surprise you again.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

**20 HOURS** 

More if you're new to RPGs, but less if you don't bother with the mini-games.

#### VERDICT

> It's a game made just for Mario fans. It's not exactly Super Mario 128, but the hilarious dialogue and unique gameplay design make it the next best thing. Go on, you won't be disappointed.





**BEST BIT:** From start to finish, it rewards you for being a Mario fanatic.

WORST BIT: You don't get Super Mario RPG thrown in for free. Yes, that's all...

#### SECOND OPINION

> I'd rather blow my brains out than play an RPG, but this is cracking. It should come with a warning that says, 'Boredom not included. Contains awesomeness'. Dean Scott







## RISING SUN Game info Price: £39.99 Publisher: Electronic Arts Web: www.uk.ea.com Players: 1-4 Mamour 9 blocks Memory: 8 blocks

No medals for this one.

#### Just a severe court martial and six months' potato-peeling duty.

Listen, Mr Japanese Man. When I shoot you in the face, I expect you to die. When I finally smash two rounds from my incredibly crap and slow-toreload rifle into your mouth, I want your head to break apart like a melon. I want to be covered in your guts, Mr Japanese Man. I want to be covered in dirty guts like a god damn newborn baby.

But Mr Japanese Man, you're not dying. I've switched to my pistol and I'm pumping rounds into your body. I'm running backwards and I keep tagging you in the chest. Mr Japanese Man, you should be spinning through the air right now. You should be performing a fantastic, gymnastic death throe for my amusement. But you aren't. You're hitting me with a sword and now I'm the one who's dead.

Do you know how cocking annoying that is? To be punished for doing absolutely nothing wrong? It doesn't help that this Guadalcanal jungle looks like absolute crap either. Remember the jungle level on GoldenEye 007? This looks as bad as that. And it's nigh on pitch black, so you can see precisely sod all. The darkness doesn't affect the legion of Mr Japanese Men though. They can shoot you, even when you're so surrounded by flora that all you can see on the screen are big jagged leaves.

We don't expect total realism, of course. When I walk over an apple, I'm quite happy for that to magically heal the gaping gunshot wound in my chest. That's okay by us. But why don't my fellow marines do, like, anything useful?

Mr Japanese Man comes running out of some bushes and instead of SHOOTING THE LITTLE SOD, my 'mates' let him run right into hand-to-hand range and bayonet them. Which is cool since they're INVINCIBLE, but I have a health bar. I could do with some cocking support, guys.

Invincible marines, eh? Well clearly they don't need my help then. I'll head back to base and read Playboy and they can take on thosé Japanese supermen by themselves. Because they can't die, America can't lose. Brilliant. If they could die, I'd have killed ton's of them. What's that brown blob over there? A tree? An enemy? It's all so indistinct. I'll kill it anyway. Whoops, sorry Hank. I'll make sure I tell your momma you did your best.

That's the fourth stage of Medal of Honor: Rising Sun, Where you get dropped into a jungle that's nigh on impossible to navigate, with gameplay guaranteed to have

you chucking pads around and swearing at the dog. Seriously, we're down to four working controllers now. And we started with about 60. Somehow bouncing my one off the radiator knackered the C-Stick and on the rebound it knocked a cup of water over the DVD player. Skillz.

But you don't see this coming after the first few stages. Because, as with Frontline before it, the opening levels are like a playable Hollywood war movie. It's a cruel trick to play on an unsuspecting gamer. Stage one gives you an impression of the scale and horror of the Pearl Harbor attacks that's about 100 times more affecting than some crappy Ben Affleck movie.

"As with *Frontline* before it, the opening levels are like a playable Hollywood war movie."

#### **Pearl Harbor**

War is hell. Look, we're not kidding. Ten minutes into Rising Sun's Pearl Harbor stage is enough to

convince you that being paid to shoot guns is a mug's game. Here's how the drama unfolds:

#### When games get gritty.



Wake up call, courtesy of a Japanese torpedo. Time to get a move on.



■ Soldier, no! Don't be a hero. Put your stupid gun down!



■ The lower decks of the ship are ablaze. Put out fires on your way up.



Back on the cannon. Give those Zeros hell, you brave American boy.



■ That's the hatch. Deep breath, get up there and hope for the best.



■ Now it's time to zip around the harbour in a speedboat, shooting.



Round about this time, your mouth says words like "Holy cock!"



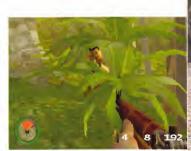
That's a close call. Try shooting them before they get that near.



■ No time for that though. Jump on the AA gun and blaze away.



Look at the mess! That's pretty hardcore. Even if it was Americans.



Grrr... don't shoot me, I'm a tiger". They'll try anything...



You're not at the beach now, son, get some clothes on





■ As usual, explosive barrels are commonplace



■ Mr Japanese Man checks for change below the hut



■ The worst part was when they started firing huge metal forks at me



Before the nob American voiceover spoils it with some tacky, patriotic twaddle, you might genuinely feel a lump in your throat. Like, because of the emotion, not because you suddenly remembered you had a sweet in your mouth.

You're in bed. A bang rocks the room and the Japanese assault is in full swing. You've got to get up onto deck avoiding fires and crackling electric cables. Up top, it really is mouth-wide-open time. Japanese Zero fighters fill the air. The harbour is thick with dense black plumes of smoke. The noise is deafening. The panic is palpable. You get yourself onto an anti-aircraft gun and start resisting. Now, at this point it's clear the 'Cube is pushing itself a little bit too hard. As you move the gun's cross hairs, the movement is sluggish. There's clearly a bit too much going on as the Zeros chug by, but it's so incredibly epic it's easy to forgive. We're not sure it's possible to die,

#### **Predator too**

Remember in Predator when Arnie stormed the jungle base? There's a section just like that in Rising Sun. Well, there's no invisible space warrior ripping people's spines out, but that's to be expected.



Camp located. Not convinced? Break out the binoculars then!



Make your way into a good assault position... quietly.



Wait for the signal, then kick off. Bullet in your head!



Storm into the village and kill everybody. Do that now.



Free the chaps tied to the posts. You're the big winner!



■ Blind soldiers make poor guards



■ Watch out for that... oh dear



■ Don't worry about saving your privates, Ryan - they can't die



n minning

■ It's a tough stance, but the eyes are screaming, "Oh crap, I'm about to eat lead

## "It's a lack of inspiration and terminal frustration that suffocate *Medal of Honor: Rising Sun.*"





though - we tried to fail and it didn't make a lot of difference.

The second chapter of this onslaught is you strafing aircraft from a boat, zipping around the stricken ships in the harbour. Once again, it makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand up. It looks amazing. What you don't know at this stage, is that a disproportionate amount of time has been spent making these levels knock your socks off. You're expecting an absolute classic, but that's not what you're getting. No way, soldier. Sorry, go home.

It's a game of peaks and troughs, but none of the peaks hit the heights of the opening stages. The mission to take down an artillery emplacement in the jungle is cracking stuff,

but it's quite easy to get lost and wander around getting bored... or shot. The game only gives you an encouraging squirt of dramatic music should you blunder in the right direction. And why is it that whenever you find yourself behind a heavy machine gun, a shed-load of Japanese appear from nowhere just so you can mow them down. It's quite dumb really.

Actually, let's talk some more about artificial intelligence. The enemy soldiers run at you in a zigzag patterns a lot of the time, so they're harder to kill. But if you had a bucket full of bananas and a lot of spare time, you could easily train a monkey to do that. Real intelligence – and we're still not talking Einstein stuff here

- would see soldiers react to gunfire. Like, when you blast a soldier off a roof with a noisy machine gun, the other two guys up there next to him make some effort to not be the next ones to die. Here, they stand oblivious; you kill their mate, they don't react. That's called stupidity.

It's all pretty disappointing after Medal of Honor: Frontline. The excuse that time was that the GameCube version was pretty much an afterthought. This time, it's a lack of inspiration and terminal frustration that suffocate this. If Rising Sun was a POW, we'd probably leave him in the jungle to starve, while we sat at home, hitting TimeSplitters 2 hard to remind us how it should be done. Dean Scott

#### In the face. Point-blank range

Your friends won't die. They just won't.



I'm sick of looking at you. I'm going to murder you and say the enemy did it. Sorry!



BANG! POINT BLANK RANGE IN YOUR EYE! How does that feel, Chad?



I shoot you RIGHT IN THE FACE and your hat comes off? Tough guy, eh?

### "You're expecting an absolute classic, but that's not what you're getting."



■ Even here in the steaming jungles carpets must be sold





■ Smoke, death, muck, bullets... when's shore leave?

■ Basic training.
This is a rifle.
It fires bullets.
They hurt



#### So, should you buy it?



#### Yes if...

You're desperate for a shooter this Christmas and think XIII looks bent.

#### No if.

You want a consistently thrilling FPS. This is up and down like an acrobat's yo-yo.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Japanese sneak attacks and rifles that take half an hour to reload.

#### **GRAPHICS**

7

At times, it pushes the GameCube to its limits. Other times, it's N64 quality.

#### SOUND

7

Rousing war scores boom out in THX. The sound effects are merely okay.

#### GAMEPLAY

6

Frustrating and fenced-in. And can't these old guns reload a bit quicker?

#### LIFE SPAN

**I MONTH** 

There are secrets, but it's quite linear. And not the longest of games either.

#### VERDICT

> Before we had a go, we'd provisionally put this on our Games of 2003 short list. We were expecting great things, but the opening sets a stellar standard that the rest of the game can't live up to.



**BEST BIT:** Pearl Harbor. Have that in your face, Benny Affleck.

WORST BIT: It feels very on-rails and will frustrate the hell out of you.

#### SECOND OPINION

> At the end of the day it's just scripted rubbish. You can't go anywhere and explore, and it was far too easy in places. The enemy soldiers are just plain stupid. *Dan Payne* 



68





■ He's crawling away – shoot his legs off, quick











■ Wheel out the hand cannon when you need to vapourise a truck

## True Crime: Streets of L

Game info Price: £39.99 Now Publisher: Activision Web: www.truecrimela.com Plavers: 1 Memory: 5 blocks

#### Well we did warn you. Activision's crime thriller promises so much, but like some dodgy suitcase trader, the end product isn't kosher.

True Crime is the gaming equivalent of buying a massive bag of crisps only to find that half the packet is filled with fresh air. There's still plenty to enjoy, but not nearly as much as there should be and you end up feeling a bit cheated.

There are things to like about this game though; the driving is fast and slick with decent controls. When you get your hands on a sports car it's terrific fun cruising around the city streets. The skill upgrade system is also enjoyable and an integral part of the game. And the city of Los Angeles, or a big chunk of it, is fabulously realised (albeit without many real shops) giving you a vast and intricate area in which to carry out your investigations.

As Nick Kang it's your job to find the truth behind some big deal that's going down in La La Land. You're a typical maverick cop with all the usual wisecracks and after a while you get very annoying. At the beginning of the game Nick is pretty ineffective against all

but the most basic of crimes. You can't really fight, you can't shoot straight and your driving is fast but sloppy.

The way around this is to solve day-to-day crimes that appear on your radar as you drive from one mission to the next. By successfully resolving these misdemeanours, some of which are quite amusing, you gain Shield Points which can

killing civilians or needlessly shooting unarmed criminals is bad and loses you a Good Cop point. And being a good or a bad cop affects the final outcome of the game.

The sad thing is that with all these good systems in place and all this good intention True Crime still feels rushed and unfinished. As you walk down the street it's not uncommon to

unnecessary civilian casualties. To fire into the air you hold and press R, but this only works when your guns are holstered. Try it with them drawn and you'll spray hot lead into an innocent crowd. The fighting is also clumsy and makes certain areas of the game almost impossible to get past. It quickly becomes frustrating and you feel that a game of this

#### "All the good elements are spoiled by the dodgy camera and controls, making this a chore."

then be spent at the 24/7 driving, shooting and fighting centres around the city. At first, these upgrades seem like an add on, but as you delve deeper into the adventure you realise that they are essential, thus adding a new dimension to the gameplay.

You must also consider the Good Cop/Bad Cop meter. Think of it as cop-karma. Resolving crimes is good and earns you a Good Cop point;

see six or seven people who all look the same. We've even attended street fights where both brawlers look exactly alike. And the same goes for the vehicles.

The controls, except for the driving, are generally sloppy. Nick can never decide if he wants to walk or run, not good when you're chasing down an escaping armed robber. Aiming is awkward, even after you've earned upgrades and can lead to scale deserves better.

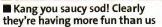
We wanted to like True Crime, it seemed like the sort of game that 'Cube owners had been desperate for since the GTA explosion. In small doses it's fun and there's so much to see that driving around LA is enjoyable. But all the good elements are spoiled by the dodgy camera and controls, making this more of a chore than a fun game. We'll stick to crisps. **Dominic Wint** 





■ What kind of game IS this?









■ Urgh, Nick! When we said hit the gas, that's not what we meant

#### **Truly a crime**

You have the coolest, weirdest actor known to man and what do you do with him?

■ There's a wealth of voice talent in True Crime; Whoopi Goldberg, Michael Madsen, Gary Oldman. Real class. But what we were most excited about was the prospect of the dark lord of dead pan himself; Christopher Walken.

The opening sequence (and most of the game) has a superb Walken voice-over. But seeing the guy that this king of acting lends his tonsils to is heart breaking. He's a big old fat beat cop with thick glasses. [sob!]



"Sometimes... I just wanna... look like a bald, fat guy"

## So, should



#### Yes if...

You're desperate for GTA, but refuse to sell out to the dark side.

#### No if...

You're expecting the sprawling, epic cop story that we'd been promised all along.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Enter the Matrix. That wasn't really finished properly either.

#### **GRAPHICS**

Very good in places, but the city feels a bit lifeless and dull.

#### SOUND

The average sound effects are improved by a decent hip-hop soundtrack.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

6

It should be good, but it's not - sections of this game are zero fun to play.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

2 WEEKS

You can replay all the missions to get the best endings if you want to.

#### VERDICT

> It sounded brilliant, with limitless possibilities. Sadly when it comes to the crunch this doesn't have the polish required for a game of its scale. There's still fun to be had, but it comes in small doses.



do this all day.

BEST BIT: Driving around WORST BIT: The contro LA is great fun. You could let it down. Every task **WORST BIT:** The controls becomes a chore.

#### SECOND OPINION

It's always sad when a promising youngster goes off the rails - the GTAbeater of six months ago has gone bad. Not bad in a good way, bad in a bad way. Tim





## LIFETIME BECKONS -



Long ago, the Lonely Mountain trembled as the Dragon Smaug destroyed the dwarf-kingdom in fire and rage. Now, the Dwarves set out upon an epic quest to reclaim their stolen treasures. And I, Gandalf the wizard, send with them the most unlikely of heroes: you, Bilbo Baggins of The Shire.









SIERRA ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

# THE PRELUDE TO THE LORD OF THE RINGS TM

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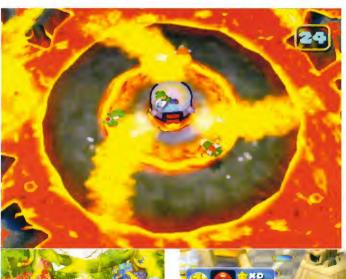












■ Chance the spinning wheel of flame-death



Mash-up the robo-Bowserites and wipe that smile off the big bad lizard's face



■ We've said it before, we'll say it again - every good game needs a few monkeys





■ That's the Princess' castle! If only the game had more Mario features like this it would rule

The best of the best in board game action returns for the fourth time, with four-player thrills in smaller-than-usual portions.

Game info Out Price: £39.99 Now Publisher: Nintendo Web: www.nintendo.co.uk Players: 1-4 Memory: 5 blocks

Would Bowser really play a friendly board game with Mario? Be serious. He's a gangsta, ladynapping hustler. While Mario concentrates on rolling a ten on the die, Bowser would be thinking of a way to get the plumber's woman back to his gaff. We always wondered what Peach and the dirty lizard got up to when... what's that? They're not real? Such lies!

Nevertheless, the four-player, mini-game party title has reached its fifth instalment and all the gang are back for more board game antics... yes, Bowser included. By now everyone should know what it's about. Move your characters around a playing board, triggering events

and playing crazy mini-games with the ultimate aim of collecting more Stars than your opponents.

All of that, as you'd expect, remains the same, with a few tweaks here and there. The item system has changed, with a new dispenser that gives you random items for free, instead of choosing which item to buy from a shop. This is one of a few minor tweaks, but if you've already got Mario Party 4 that's not a good enough reason to buy this one.

The biggest new feature is the special one-player Story mode, in which you go up against Bowser and his mini-Bowser trio to stop them turning dreams into nightmares. Yes, it sounds a bit cheesy to us too, but what it boils down to is a series of board games where you have to steal all of the Coins from each of the three mini-Bowsers. Beat them on each board and you'll be treated to an awesome boss fight, which is not another board game, but an actual ruck like

you'd expect to see at the end of Mario's 3D adventures. We won't spoil it for you, but the battle is all-out action and may be the best part of the game.

Everything else is best played – as always – with four players and in those modes, it's all about the mini-games. There are more than 70 new ones and while most are a laugh, like Dodge Bomb (a deathmatch game where you take out opponents with bombs) there are a few that are not quite so entertaining. A game called Get a Rope springs to mind, where two players choose a rope, then pull it. After a brief wait one player gets squashed. It's all luck and compared to the other games, it's dull.

The last thing you need, after having waited ages for everyone to roll the dice and move, is to be disappointed by the mini-games. The amount of time you spend waiting is the biggest downfall of Mario Party 5. it feels like for every 20 seconds of fun, you've got a five-minute wait.

Everyone has to have their turn - that's unavoidable – but every task and event takes far too long, simply for the benefit of presentation. It's a treat to see Nintendo characters stroll onscreen for events, like when DK appears to give you some Coins, but it takes ten to 15 seconds to do that alone and after a while it's just annoying. The menus are the same, with stars whooshing around each time you select something. It all takes time. A few seconds here and there turns into minutes – that's how long it takes to get going.

We reckon the most fun to be had is in Mini-Game mode where you'll be able to play all the minigames that you have already played in the other modes. The Mini-Game mode takes out the slow board game bits and hits you with non-stop thrills - you can even set up tournaments, too. This is where the action's at. It may not be as crazy as Wario Ware, but it's still entertaining with four-players. Mike Jackson



"The amount of time you spend waiting is the biggest downfall of *Mario Party 5*."

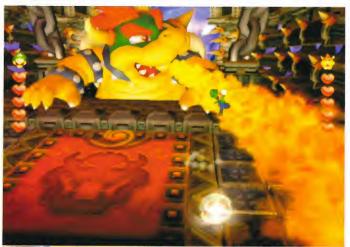
#### Piece out, dude

One of the most basic games is the most fun

One of our favourite minigames is Piece Out. Different sized blocks appear on the screen on a conveyor belt and you have to grab them up and use them to fill in your field. You don't have to line them up by colours, altough you will get a bonus for making the effort. It's a mad scramble to grab the best blocks before your opponent and fitting them in the right spaces requires quick thinking and good control.



Daisy's going for all blues. She's after a cheaky bonus



Another plumber to incinerate... we wish we had Bowser's job



It's taken so long to role the die, that Star's facial hair has gone out of fashion



■ Bzzzakt! Either way, lizard-kind will lose an icon. Anyone for a Bowser burger?



#### Yes if..

You have the patience of a saint and don't own any other Mario Party games.

You think all board games are for losers and can't stand having to wait your turn.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Quick, two-minute games and enjoy a good yell with mates in front of the telly.

#### GRAPHICS

Bright and colourful, but lacking in detail - and they're not very Mario-ish.

#### SOUND

It would be cooler with more sound and music from Mario's adventures.

#### GAMEPLAY

Some mini-games are great, some aren't. The board play is way too slow.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

1 MONTH

Not a game you'll play for years, unless you and your friends have a major rivalry.

#### VERDICT

Gaming friends or siblings are essential this is nothing without the multiplayer. Party games have to be nutty and this is fun, but long, tiresome waiting times hinder its ability to thrill the average gamer.



**BEST BIT:** Mini-Game mode is the best place for AGES for the others to uninterrupted mayhem.

**WORST BIT:** Waiting for have their turn.

#### SECOND OPINION

> If your idea of multiplayer gaming fun is throwing grenades into a friend's mouth this is not for you. Buy it on Christmas Eve and take it back on Boxing Day. Kingsley





### Starsky & Hutch

Cardigans at the ready, it's time to go back to the 70s with the classic crime-fighting team.

Starsky's the driver, Hutch is the passenger with a pistol. Together they form the hippest and funkiest crime-fighting duo the world has ever seen. But, oh no! Their game isn't cool at all. Their game is glitchy and funless and it looks like a hangover from the N64.

The gameplay apes Driver on PSone with you in control of the famous red and white Ford Gran Torino. The twist is that you are controlling both characters. Whilst Starsky keeps the pedal to the metal, Hutch must hang out of the window shooting at power-ups, special icons and the enemies. The trick is to keep viewer figures high by performing crazy stunts and doing the most damage to the perps. If the viewers turn off it's Game Over.

It takes a while to adapt to the idea, which sees you aiming the car in the direction of the target and waiting for the

#### Game info

Out Now

Price: £24.99

Publisher: Empire Interactive Web: www.starsky-and-hutch.com Players: 1-2

Memory: 2 blocks

reticle to appear. In most of the missions it works, a little bit clumsily perhaps, but the best you could expect. The problem comes in the 'protect' missions where enemies do all they can to take out your charge whilst you try and run the bad guys off the road. The trouble is that as the enemies weave about in front of you, you just can't help hitting the good guys. Pretty soon it's all gone wrong.

One way around this is to grab a mate and try the two-player game. Here one of you gets to be the driver, one the shooter. We managed to have a bit of a laugh pretending to be the police, but this setup made the game too easy.

The presentation could be a lot better, too. The high point is the 70s-style soundtrack, but the dialogue grows stale very quickly and the graphics are laughably clumsy. This just doesn't do justice to the TV show. **Dominic Wint** 

#### So, should vou huv



#### Yes if...

You like big cardigans, you changed your name to David Soul and own a Gran Torino.

#### No if...

You want an enjoyable cops and robbers title that looks smart and plays well.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Having a laugh for five minutes before growing bored and going out to play footy.

#### GRAPHICS

This just doesn't look like a 'Cube title – it's dated and rough around the edges.

#### SOUND

6

Cool music and decent sound effects, but the voices are poor (except Huggy).

#### **GAMEPLAY**

6

Occasional high points are sullied by repetitive missions and awkward aiming.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

**5 HOURS** 

In that time you'll have either finished it or grown tired and moved on.

#### VERDICT

> The first few missions are fun, then you realise the remaining challenges are just variations on a theme. It looks out of date, the driving and aiming is unpredictable, it's way too short... basically, it's a bit smelly.



the classic TV show and the music's pretty good. and awkward.

BEST BIT: It feels a lot like WORST BIT: Driving and aiming can get frustrating

#### SECOND OPINION

> Take a great TV show and turn it into a great game. It sounds plausible, so why can't anyone do it? Okay, for £1 million, I'll sell you my Fawlty Towers game. Kingsley Singleton



## Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeon Dice Monsters So, should you buy it

#### Another game of the cartoon that not even Yu-Gi would shout about.

Game info Price: £29.99

Publisher: Konami Web: www.konami-europe.com Players: 1-2

It's not about the cards, it's about the heart. At least that's what Yu-Gi always says in the cartoon series. So where's the heart in this? Where's the heart in a game that requires you to study the manual like a school book for a day before you can even think about playing it?

This game is not based on the Yu-Gi-Oh! card game, but on another game that's played in an episode of the series, called (surprisingly) Dungeon Dice Monsters. This is a very in-depth and complicated game of luck and strategy that players of the card game will not be familiar with, yet, there's no tutorial mode.

You roll dice to get points in different areas, attack, defence, magic, movement and the like, which allow you to summon monsters and perform your chosen tasks out on the field. Your ultimate task is to eliminate the three points from the

opposing Die Master's stand. If we were to try and explain the rules any further, this one-page review would become a fourpager, and you still wouldn't understand and if you did, you'd be a geek.

So, after being completely puzzled by the manual, you turn the game on and spend two, maybe three hours trying to figure out what the hell's going on – a task requiring an elite level of patience.

Once you're over that hurdle, you'll discover that the strategy system is actually very well put together and the more you understand DDM, the more tactics you'll be stringing together.

Unfortunately, all the one-on-one battles in the game are just that - battles. Even in the Tournament mode, there's not even so much as a hint of a story line. Fans of the cartoon will be deeply disappointed and anyone else will get bored in next to no time. Mike Jackson

> Where we played it... In our Arwing that Miyamoto gave us, flying through space in another universe. Or maybe in the NOM UK offices. Dunno.





#### Yes if...

You love to study stats and numbers for hours on end, with no desire for a social life.

#### No if...

You have a social life, you hate the cartoon series or your favourite card game is Snap.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Games like Virtual Chess 64, or if the mere thought of Yu-Gi-Oh! makes you crazy.

#### **GRAPHICS**

The battle arena looks dark and dull. and the fight scenes are nothing special.

#### SOUND

4

From the sound alone, we'd think this was a GBC game. Volume down, please.

#### GAMEPLAY

It mixes luck with strategy. Clever, but it takes a year to learn and understand.

#### LIFE SPAN

10 HOURS+

That's if you can be arsed to figure out the game in the first place...

#### VERDICT

A good strategy game with fatal flaws – no tutorial, no plot and very poor sound. It's a half-finished product. A bit more effort and this would have been much cooler. We might have even liked it.



**BEST BIT:** Socking your opponent in the kisser. That wins every time.

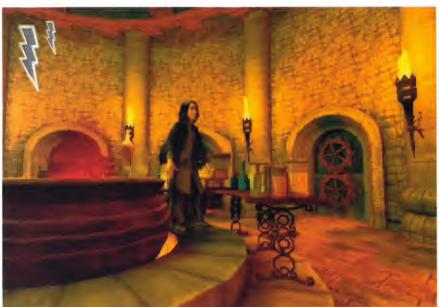
WORST BIT: It's all so confusing and there's no Tutorial mode.

#### **SECOND OPINION**

> Tactically sound and true to the real thing. but too much time passes simply rolling the dice and waiting for something to happen. It gets boring very quickly. Dominic Wint







■ Alan Rickman suddenly realised his slow, droning voice had made everyone disappear



■ Smarty pants Granger is annoying in any form; book, game or film



■ Potter got all defensive when the kids started making fun of his 'pink wand'

## Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

#### Game info

Price: £39.99
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Web: www.uk.ea.com
Players: 1
Memory: 9 blocks

An old game, a new look. This has got 'from Grandma' written all over it.

You've seen this before on PSone a couple of years ago. It looks nicer now though, more like last year's Chamber of Secrets. It's a

Out |

Now

good fun game aimed at the younger end of the market. Think of it as *Zelda*-lite and you won't go far wrong.

The story sticks rigidly to that of the book. It's Harry's first year at Hogwart's and that means learning the basics and finding your way around the building, as well as defeating the evil Lord Voldemort.

There's nothing special about this game, but that doesn't make it bad. The graphics

are nice, the sound is nice, the story line is, well, nice. Everything moves along at a gentle pace, giving you the chance to soak in the atmosphere and imagine yourself as The Boy Who Lived.

The best element is the way that Harry learns new skills. You enter each classroom and your teacher will tell you what spell you are about to learn. You must then overcome a series of obstacles and puzzles involving the spell and emerge from the challenge unscathed to add the power to your arsenal. This is

definitely for *Potter* fans and younger gamers only. *Dominic Wint* 

#### So, should you buy it?



#### Yes if...

You loved the GBA, GBC or PSone versions and you need the graphical upgrade.

#### No if...

You've finished Zelda and you're looking for the next challenge. This is very basic stuff.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Harry Potter – everything he does and says, every move he makes.

#### **GRAPHICS**

7

Polished and pretty. Not particularly ground-breaking, just nice.

#### SOUND

6

A little uninspiring. The music is good, but the speech soon grates.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

7

There's no getting away from the fact that it's for kids, but it's still good.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

1 WEEK

The main quest is relatively simple, but there's a little bit of replay value.

#### **VERDICT**

> Yes it's childish, yes it's simple and yes it's relatively short. But there's certainly fun to be found in Harry's first year at Hogwart's especially if you're a big *Potter* fan. If you're after a challenge, go for *The Wind Waker*.



BEST BIT: Learning new skills by undertaking classroom tests.



voices get really annoying after a while.

#### SECOND OPINION

> I hate *Potter*, unless it's Brian Potter from *Phoenix Nights*, ergo I hate this game. I know it's popular and kiddie, but it doesn't have to be this simple. *Dean Scott* 



"REFRESHED"

1 %

## Quidditch World C

Imagine if footy games lasted until the ref decided one team was good enough to win.

Quidditch works in a book because J.K. Rowling can make the matches sound as exciting as possible. She can weave an elaborate tale of brave moves, daring tackles and an incredibly close game won only by some unbelievable broomstick

in the catching of the Golden Snitch. The game takes the thrills and spills of Quidditch and weaves them into a crap jumper with one sleeve longer than the other and a picture of a turd on the front.

manoeuvres from Potter and Co. ending

First you learn the skills you'll need for all areas of the game and then apply them out on the field as you cruise to the House Cup at Hogwart's.

Then you get to choose a national side

Game info

Price: £39.99 Publisher: EA Web: www.uk.ea.com

Players: 1-2

Now

Memory: 3 blocks

and battle for the World Cup. You play an ordinary game of Quidditch where you get the Quaffle through the scoring rings and rack up points. A Snitch meter between the scores measures how stylishly you are playing and the halves of the Snitch move closer together, or further apart, until the pieces join and the race for the Snitch is on.

But such a subjective scoring system leads to scoring goal after goal until you have so many points that it's impossible for the opposition to win.

This should have been an unlockable game in the Harry Potter adventure titles, or a budget release. It's just not worth full price as it gets repetitive and annoying far too quickly. Dominic Wint



■ The Australian pitch seems to be burrowed into Ayer's Rock



■ Hogwart's traffic lights confused even the most careful of drivers



■ Slytherin (boo!) players have a really bad attitude. And poor dental hygiene



#### So, should you buy



#### Yes if...

You're absolutely mad on Potter and you wish that you could play Quidditch.

You're expecting a new take on sport. This is pretty heavy going.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Games that don't appear to have an end, like the game of life, perhaps.

#### **GRAPHICS**

8

Of course it looks nice – EA made it. There are some neat touches, too.

#### SOUND

There's a stirring musical score, but the commentary is far too poash!

#### GAMEPLAY

Score a goal, tackle, score a goal. Repeat ad infinitum. And no, that's not a spell.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

**15 HOURS** 

You'll finish it, give it to a younger relative and forget all about it.

#### VERDICT

> Quidditch should have stayed on the pages of the Harry Potter stories where it's action-packed and exciting. Here it tries so hard to be authentic that it ends up being dull, slow and boring.



to build up a cache of special moves.

BEST BIT: Linking Combos WORST BIT: Scoring over and over again until the Snitch is sighted.

#### **SECOND OPINION**

> Initially intriguing, but ultimately rubbish, Quidditch World Cup lacks any real depth, excitement or skill. This is purely for Harry Potter nuts and nobody else. Dean Scott





#### **Game info**

Price: £39.99 Now Publisher: Acclaim Web: www.extremeg.com Players: 1-4 Memory: 20 blocks

#### It stands for Extreme G... oh, who cares. F-Zero GX fanclub meeting in session!

Once per hardware generation, Nintendo drops a future racing game that sets your eyes on fire. Each and every F-Zero game has been a gem, but they only blast by every four years or so. That leaves an awful lot of space for a rival roller coaster space racer. And here's XGRA, a mere couple of months after F-Zero GX. Umm... whoops.

It's not crap. It's resolutely un-crap. But it's nowhere near as good as the latest blistering F-Zero instalment. It's fast, but not as fast. It's pretty, but not as pretty. It's got guns, but there's a reason F-Zero doesn't: it's a game of skill – there's no getting zapped – the fastest wins. The more we think about it, the more we love F-Zero GX. It's hardcore and awesome, and you should buy it now. And once you have it, you won't need this. Sorry, XGRA.

supposed to set this apart, but it basically manifests itself as robots and squid men bitching at you mid-race. You work your way up to bigger contracts with better teams, get jazzier bikes and carry out cool little vendettas on the other riders. It's slow to get into though, unlike F-Zero GX which SHOUTS JOY INTO YOUR FACE FROM THE SECOND YOU SWITCH IT ON.

The handling is pretty good – twitchy, but responsive – which is exactly what you need when you're doing 500mph down a hill and the road suddenly forks. The weapons really light up the screen, but it detracts from the racing when you're trying to get a lock-on cursor for heat seeking rockets. The tracks? Pretty good. The developers clearly understand the rush of thrashing up a steep incline before gasping at – and then dropping into – the yawning chasm below. Dean Scott

#### ■ The race is on – first one to the finish can swap XGRA for a copy of F-Zero GX

The narrative of the game was





■ Strangely quiet, like the streets of Surrey when Man Utd are playing at home...



## So, should



#### Yes if...

The only kind of games you buy are future racers and F-Zero GX has sold out.

#### No if...

You want the absolute best a niche genre has to offer - that's F-Zero GX, dumbass.

#### You'll love it if you like...

**Driving around the Nemesis at Alton Towers** on a nuclear-powered super-bike.

#### **GRAPHICS**

Futuristic, but occasionally bland and lacking in inspiration.

#### SOUND

8

Pounding beats by artists you actually know. It truly trumps F-Zero here.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

The speed's not quite there and the weapons are a bit hit and miss.

#### LIFE SPAN

**10 HOURS** 

The Career mode doesn't take long to crack. Multiplayer too, obviously.

#### VERDICT

> Six months from now when this turns up for under a score, it might be worth a punt. Right now it has arrived spluttering into F-Zero GX's napalm exhaust-fume wake, had a little cough and fallen over.





**BEST BIT:** It looks cool. The bike and track design GX already exists and is nice and futuristic.

**WORST BIT: Sadly, F-Zero** makes this look rubbish.

#### SECOND OPINION

> In F-Zero GX, there are THIRTY cars in each race. In this, the most you can have is eight. Which, by the power of maths, makes it 73.4% less fun. Dominic Wint



"FIRST LOSER"



■ The shrunken graphics can't hide a truly awful shirt

#### Playing it on the go

Connectivity...

Sadly no. A GameCube link would be cool.

Better Back Lit...

It's quite dark. SP or bright light required.

Multiplayer...

Take turns or link-up, it's your choice.

Save...

There's a cart save point for each stage.

Extras...

New moves to unlock and skill upgrades.

#### Where we played it...

Sitting in a shopping centre watching the world go by and thinking about Grinding.



It's amazing how many skateboard-friendly objects there are around these days



■ The Balance-Bar-come-hovering-waxedmoustache is back again. Very Mario Bros....

## Tony Hawk's Underground

#### Game info

Price: £29.99
Publisher: Activision

Web: www.thugonline.com Players: 1-2 Memory: Cart save

#### It'll tie your fingers in knots and have you swearing like a navvy, but fun is guaranteed.

If you turn this game on and leave it running to see the Demo mode you'll see skateboarders falling off.

It's something you need to get used to, but once you do you'll be rewarded with a tough, challenging game that's totally different to the GameCube version.

The basic principal is the same as ever. You play an up-and-coming skater hungry for success. To get recognition you'll need to show your mates — and the wider world — that you've got the skillz. This is obviously a pared-down version of the GameCube game which makes it more of a 'go there, do this' proposition than a free-roaming skate-fest.

The biggest obstacle to overcome is the isometric view, just like the ones used in

past GBA *Tony* games. It takes ages to get used to and only a few will master it, making this more difficult than it needs to be. And because of the smaller screen, some of the challenges are very tough.

That said, this is a good game with tight controls and a nice soundtrack. Graphically there's little improvement over past incarnations, but *Tony* veterans are well catered for with a wealth of tasks to complete. The best part is learning new skills which, like in the GameCube version, relies on you performing a required amount of tricks, scoring a big combo or holding a Grind for a specified time. Each new skill is rewarded with a new move and it's fun whiling away the hours just trying to learn a new Grab or Flip. *Dominic Wint* 

## So, should you buy it?



#### Yes if...

You're a veteran of previous GBA Tony games and you're after the next challenge.

#### No if...

You're expecting a shrunken version of the 'Cube game. This is a different proposition.

#### You'll love it if you like...

The past four incarnations of the GBA game. But now you can get off your board.

#### GRAPHICS

7

Detailed, but dark in places and some of the levels seem overly cluttered.

#### SOUND

7

Everything in its right place, but the skater's cry of anguish is rubbish.

#### GAMEPLAY

8

It's tough, but there's a great sense of reward when you complete a task.

#### LIFE SPAN

**I MONTH** 

Too intense to finish in one or two sittings – you'll be dipping in and out.

#### **VERDICT**

> More niggly than the GC version and less accessible. If you're prepared to give it some attention you'll be rewarded with a deep and challenging experience. If you want an easier *Tony Hawk* game try the GameCube ones.





BEST BIT: The tough and imaginative challenges that you're faced with.

WORST BIT: The view is mostly good, but it can be very awkward at times.

#### SECOND OPINION

> Just as Hideo Kojima gets 3D motion sickness, isometric views give me a terrible pain in the ass. But once the morphine kicks in this is good fun. *Kingsley Singleton* 



78



## The Sims: Bustin' Out

Game info

Price: £39.99

Publisher: Electronic Arts Web: www.uk.ea.com

Players: 1-4 Memory: 161 blocks Now

#### Whether budding Kray brother or wannabe Russell Crowe, bust out with *The Sims* to fulfil your fantasies without leaving the house.

The Sims rules. Where else can you bring obnoxious gym freaks to justice by starving them to death or condemn millionaire stars to a life of wretched incontinence? Not in the spirit of the game? So what? Just like real life, we all get our jollies in different ways. Happily, Bustin' Out adds loads more chances to destroy the lives of your onscreen freaks in more spectacular ways than ever before.

Played through in a series of missions, Bustin' Out gives you seven unique career paths to choose, from bling-heavy gangsta type to mad scientist. To win at each you need to be successful enough to work your way up through each career's ten ranks of promotion.

Let's say you want your name up in lights and your Sim-prints set in con crete on Hollywood Blvd. You need to work your way up through the ranks, from kids entertain er in a funny suit to understu dy, bit-part actor and so on. Follow the bespectacled path of the nerd and you'll have to be lab assistant before you can start creating Frankenstein-style experime nts of your own.

How successful you are at your chosen career is determined by your Sim's innate personality and how good you are at enriching all aspects of its life, from bladder control to its political debating skills. This is where Bustin' Out vastly im proves upon last year's Sims game. Not only do you create a unique look for your Sim from hun dreds of combinations

of body shapes, clothes and saucy nurse outfits (oh yes!), you also have almost complete control over shaping their personality.

For instance, create an overconfident US sports star-style character and you'll blitz through the more active and sociable lifestyles, but give him a test tube and a Bunsen burner and he'll be weeping into his jockstrap. Design an aggressive, violent and ambitious Sim and he'll be lord of his gangster's manor, but useless at fighting the power of the fascist government in the 'counterculture' career path. Naturally these traits determine how your Sim interacts with others and what's especially cool is that Sims will even hold themselves in appropriate postures according to how outgoing they are.

Earn the right to travel around town and you get to meet the inhabitants of locations like the spooky mansion and science lab. This will help your Sim learn and it's up to you to provide the

necessary guidance to get them climbing the promotional ladder. What skills you decide to enhance and where you eventually chose to shack up all determine the career path for your Sim. It's a slow process of trial and error, but a fun one if you've got the patience.

The Sims' appeal has always been found in its simplicity and while the basic principle of Bustin' Out is the same as always, you feel as if there's much more of a point to what you're doing, as well as having a lot more control over your dude.

Given the slow pace and the amount of trial and error involved in getting your Sim fit for human interaction, Bustin' Out still isn't quite the simulation game to win over those who prefer an instant gaming fix. But if you don't mind investing a bit of time, this could well be the one Sims title where you have as much fun actually playing properly as you do trying to kill off your heroes. Darren Fox

"*Bustin' Out* offers u**m**ique career paths to choose, from gangstas to mad scientists."

■ Nice wheels,





#### **Trolly dash**

You'll get every chance to splash the cash in Bustin' Out

As well as winning the right to buy new vehicles to travel around in (from the sad pink scooter to the awesome dune buggy), The Sims: Bustin' Out has got more cool items to reward your character than your local shopping mall. From state-of-the-art widescreen TVs and holographic video games machines to DJ decks and gnome rockets (please don't ask), this is surely every shopaholic's dream game. And you get to buy it before you can play, too!



Who said science is all tissue cultures?



Welcome in a new era of holographic gaming. Expect a UK release in around 2013

### "You can condemn millionaire movie stars to a life of wretched incontinence."



## So, should you buy it?



#### Yes if...

You enjoy slower-paced simulations and tweaking character stats to reap big rewards.

#### No if...

You think there's nothing sadder than playing a game that simulates real life.

#### You'll love it if you like...

The first Sims GC game, or classic 'fun' sims like Theme Park World and Theme Hospital.

#### **GRAPHICS**

7

Strangely dull colours, but there's lots of detail in the objects and Sims on screen.

#### SOUND

7

Their babble will irritate, but the unique music for each area is nice enough.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

8

It's slow but rewarding and deep, despite the simplicity of the basic idea.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

2 MONTHS +

Seven career paths and promotions in each make for a time-consuming game.

#### VERDICT

> In no way a giant leap forward for the Sims franchise, but there are enough new additions to make this exciting in its own right. You'll hate it if you think games should be all about guns n' guts.



BEST BIT: Trying to ogle worst BIT: The slow your lady Sim through the pace will really put some pixel effect. We're pervs. people off.

#### **SECOND OPINION**

> As good as *Bustin' Out* is, I prefer spending time with REAL mini-people. But sometimes visiting day at the dwarf centre is stressful, so I throw this on to relax. *Dean Scott* 





### **Judge Dredd: Dredd vs Death**

Borag thungg, earthlets. Didn't get that? Then you may as well stop reading now.

#### Game info

Price: £39.99 Publisher: Vivendi Universal Web: www.dreddvsdeath.com Players: 1-4 Memory: 2 blocks

Out Now

In 1977, Pat Mills and John Wagner invented the future cop comic strip Judge Dredd as a comment on the increasingly right-wing nature of Western society. Almost nobody got the joke and Dredd became an icon to millions in the pages of 2000AD. Now there's a new Dredd game and it's debatable whether anyone will get this either, but for different reasons.

If you're unfamiliar with *Dredd* there's no point explaining it all here - the only reason you'd want to get this game is if you're into the comics already. If not, spug off, pinky! Get back on the Pedway. Not that you need to know Mega City One like the back of your hand to appreciate some hidden depth here, it's just that it's a much worse game if you don't. Dredd fans will enjoy looking around the levels and laughing at the in-jokes - the rest of

you will see this for what it is, a bogstandard FPS.

Graphically it's nothing special, despite some nice lighting and a cool ragdoll effect when you drop a perp, and the levels, including Smokatoriums and the Resyk recycling plant look okay, if a bit boxy. The soundtrack is pretty good though and the dialogue is a laugh, but again only if you're a Dredd fan.

It's no TimeSplitters 2, it's no XIII, it's certainly no Metroid Prime, even though it nicks bits and pieces from all three. What you have here is something you might get AFTER you've bought those games. Judge Dredd's only distinguishing feature, other than the backdrop provided by 25 years of 2000AD, is the Law Meter. This gadget assesses your performance as a Judge, meaning you can't just run up to a Flabbie and cap them – you have to try and arrest them. This is cool because you can scare perps into submission, or shoot them in the knees and have them throw down their weapons. And in Mega City One everyone's guilty of something, from illegally keeping a hamster to smoking in public. That's the future, by Grud - and I am the law. Kingsley Singleton







■ The sentence: 40 years. The crime: kneeling in public

### So, should



#### Yes if...

You like Dredd and can't wait for a better version, or you love FPSs, no matter what.

#### No if...

It's a first-class FPS you're after - there are a few titles you should check out before this.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Hmm... themed First Person Shooters, maybe? Or dodgy movie tie-in games?

#### GRAPHICS

Some nice effects don't hide the blocky levels. Not as pretty as 2000AD.

#### SOUND

8

The voices and soundtrack are good, and Dredd's one-liners never get annoying.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

6

Offers very little in the way of new thrills, just middle-of-the-road FPS antics.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

2 WEEKS

Story mode, Co-op Story mode, Arcade mode, multiplayer, unlockables. Not bad.

#### VERDICT

> A mindless blaster, that'll hold most appeal for fans of the comics. It's definitely worth a rental, but in the long run this is less likely to be spinning in your GameCube than rotting in an Iso-Cube



**BEST BIT:** The setting. Judge Dredd's a great comic, full of cool stuff. **WORST BIT:** There's not much in the way of FPS innovation here.

#### SECOND OPINION

> Sure, Kingsley thought it was alright, but he grew up with the comics – for the rest of you this is gonna be like playing the bits that fell off TimeSplitters2. Dean Scott



## **TG Rally**

Game info

Out

Price: **£29.99** Publisher: **Kemco** 

Web: www.kemcogames.com Players: 1-2

## Proof positive that the only licence you need for a decent rally game is a licence to drive... fast.

No real cars, no real courses, no real commentators, but none of it matters because *TG Rally* is great fun. Each course gives you loads of opportunity to slide the arse out of super-fast cars, all the while knowing that you are in complete control of the beasts. The handling is what makes this a winner. Slidy enough so you feel like you're actually driving a rally car yet with enough control to stop you spinning off the course at every corner.

And the number of different stages is almost staggering. Everything from snow to dust is covered in the multitude of courses you have to face. The graphics are also nice and bright, allowing you a great view of the upcoming twists and turns.

In Championship mode there are three difficulty settings for you to get stuck into. Each mode is pretty large with massive variation in the levels. Cars can be selected at the beginning of each section and you can also adjust the settings of your chariot to suit the surroundings.

This is racing at its most stripped down and yet at its most enjoyable. The pace notes are basic to say the least with only about four co-driver instructions per race. It's not quite as accomplished as *V-Rally 3*, nor as deep, but it's great for a five-minute blast. *Dominic Wint* 

### So, should you buy it?



#### Yes if...

You're looking for an accessible and instantly enjoyable rally game with no pointless frills.

#### No if...

You're the kind of person who agonises over suspension settings and ride height.

#### You'll love it if you like...

Dipping in and out of games. TG Rally is one of those you can pick up anytime, anywhere.

#### **GRAPHICS**

8

Colourful, detailed and a decent draw distance, but the cars are a bit blocky.

#### SOUND

5

Pretty sparse. No music, average car noises and predictable pace notes.

#### **GAMEPLAY**

8

Great handling and huge variety in the courses is what makes this a good game.

#### **LIFE SPAN**

2 WEEKS

It's going to take a while to get through all three Championship modes.

#### VERDICT

> You'll have a good time with TG Rally. This is no-frills racing at its best. The modifying options are there if you want them, but all you need to do is select the right tyres and get going. A real pick-up-and-play belter.



BEST BIT: The handling is near perfect. Just what you need.

**WORST BIT:** The voiceover. It's so muffled you'll have to trust us.

#### SECOND OPINION

> This is great. It leaves all the stupid cartweaking stuff to GameCube games and concentrates on handling. It's the best drive of all the GBA rally games. *Dean Scott* 





TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK

#### Playing it on the go

Connectivity...

Nothing doing here, friend. It's trapped!

Better Back Lit...

Only slightly. Bright and colourful.

Multiplayer...

Two players, but you'll both need a copy.

Save...

Cart save and there are three slots.

Extras...

Not unless you count unlocking new cars.

Where we played it...

On a wet Sunday in Wales, watching Petter Solberg win the WRC title.





■ Would you drive a car that looked like this?





■ Hey, that bloke's nicked your motor... hang on, that's not right

## Smaller reviews. For

#### **Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu**

Publisher: Ubi Soft Release date: Out now Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Game Save: 2 blocks

■ Take a look at the Batman cartoon. A group of thugs are up to no good. What happens? Batman bursts from the shadows, throwing Baterangs at their heads and slaps them into submission in a proper ninja style. It's very cool.

What doesn't happen? Batman runs up to one of the many thugs and throws three slow-paced kicks in his direction whilst getting battered from behind by the others with sticks and poles in a proper idiot style.

That's very crap. Where's the similarity there? Batman isn't at all like this. The responsiveness is very poor. Batman is an agile fighter in the cartoon. Hit an attack button a few times here and your character won't do anything you want until he's finished his sluggish combo. You can't avoid attacks. You get battered every

time, then you die. Everything about this game is sloppy. Enemies bust out of the sewers, knocking the manhole cover off. David Blaine must be the man

under the mask because, as if by magic, Batman walks over the big hole like it's not even there. Attention to detail? What's that? Viewtiful Joe may only be 2D, but compared to Joe's skills, Batman in Rise of Sin Tzu fights like a three-legged donkey. But this is a fighting game. Whoops.

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK





#### Crash Nitro Kart

Publisher: Vivendi Release date: Out now Price: £29.99 Players: 1-4 Game Save: Cart save



When enough effort is put in, the GBA is capable of running 3D graphics at a smooth, acceptable rate, as demonstrated brilliantly by games like V-Rally and Doom. But where those titles succeeded, Crash Nitro Kart fails miserably.

This would be a hugely entertaining cartoon racer if it wasn't for one fatal flaw - the appaling slowdown. At any point when there's more than a couple of 3D objects on screen – like a row of item boxes or any of the other racers - the whole game slows down to a snail's pace.

It's awful. And being as the opposition are pretty competitive and the item boxes are spread out all over the track, the slowdown is almost constant. What a terrible shame.

If it wasn't for this awful frame-rate, we'd be telling you all about being able to race as any of the star characters from the Bandicoot series in a cool Adventure mode where you must win races to save Earth from an evil villain named Velo. And we'd say how nice the tracks look and how cool the music and sound effects are. But none of that really matters now, because it moves like your grandad on a cold December morning. A spoiled gem.







#### Hugo Bukkazoom!

Publisher: ITE Media Release date: Out now Price: £19.99 Plavers: 1-2 Game Save: None



Not many games make you scream with anguish, but Hugo Bukkazoom! has this skill. Hugo's been shrunk to the size of a small insect along with a gang of his mates. Instead of trying to get big again, the merry gang decide to invest in some minicarts and have a race around the tiny tracks.

Bukkazoom!'s main failing lies in the stodgy controls. The game has many different modes that all require a degree of precision; from driving through checkpoints to knocking greenfly into holes. But the carts' turning circles are wider than a combine harvester's - miss a checkpoint or target and you're scuppered. There's also no real depth as you select the length of each championship rather than being supplied with Mario Kart-style cups.

With loads of moreaccomplished kartracing games on GBA there's no reason for this game to exist. It's slow, tiresome and at times painful. Twenty quid or not, this does not belong in your GBA.





## your eyes to savour.

#### Crash Nitro Kart

Publisher: Vivendi Universal Release date: Out now Price: £39.99 Players: 1-4 Memory Card: 3 blocks



It's a real shame that Crash Nitro Kart is out about the same time as Mario's latest four-wheeled adventure, because the old Italian Stallion makes this marsupial pretender look a lot worse than it

actually is.

Crash Nitro Kart is certainly no stinker, there are loads of races to take part in and the opponents are tough enough to keep you coming back for a second and third attempt. There's also a nice set of challenge levels that you can unlock as you battle your way through the main game. These range from time trial-type events to collect-a-thons. Again, nothing sensational, but decent fun all the same.

The problem with Crash Nitro Kart is that it feels ordinary. There's no great sense of speed, the power-ups are nothing new, the courses are unimaginative, although they look okay. There's nothing in here that

would make you go "wow".

What there is is a solid, mildly enjoyable kart-racing game that we've all seen before. If you're a serious *Crash Bandicoot* fan, you should probably see a psychiatrist, but you'll probably love Nitro Kart. If GameCube kart racing's your thing then Double Dash is the obvious choice.





#### Premier Manager 2003-2004

Publisher: Zoo Digital Release date: Out now Price: £29.99 Players: 1 Game Save: Cart save



Spent all week in training tinkering with tactics? Set up a website like the rest of the corporate whores? Just seen some bunch of scuffers nick it 1-0 on the Saturday? It's time to throw a teacup... or maybe your GBA.

In an age when football ranks above not catching fire in many people's list of priorities, a management game on GBA should be a sure-fire winner. Premier Manager certainly gives you a powerful thrill when your team's score changes from 0 to 1 on the teletext-style interface, but what's less certain is whether this is as good as it could be. The Championship Manager series on the PC has created many a bleary eyed hermit, but that's a far more expansive game than this. What you get here is footy management stripped right down to its jockstrap – there doesn't seem to be enough depth to stop you feeling the results are ultimately random.

The menus are fine, but take time to navigate and you can choose your level of involvement in the day-to-day running of the club. The range of teams means you can have a go at getting the likes of Napoli back into Serie A, but it comes at a cost the loss of the lower English leagues - so, there'll be no glory days for Bristol Rovers here. There's no coverage of the Scottish leagues either, but that's pretty much the only good news left to tell you.





#### Spyro: Attack of the Rhynocs

Publisher: Vivendi Universal Release date: Out now Price: £29.99 Players: 1 Game Save: Cart save



This is the third Spyro game for the GBA. All have been quite good, but none have been ground-breaking. And nothing has changed this time.

The adventurous reptile has got to deal with a bad dude called Ripto, in the usual evil-plot-foiling sort of adventure, which basically amounts to having to collect a whole load of items. A bit like Banjo

You'll be collecting gems, new powers and different types of breath (just like Seasons of Ice) for Spyro, as well as other specific pick-ups for each individual level.

If Spyro takes too many hits and is 'killed', instead of losing a life, he'll just be sent back to the previous checkpoint. There is no limit to the amount of tries you can have at completing a section either so you can simply keep on it. This may sound too easy, but it cuts out the frustration of dying and having to do the entire level again.

The same graphical style from previous Spyro games has returned, with slight tweaks, making for a generally nice looking platformer. If only the repetitive background music wasn't so annoying.







You've bought them, now tell us how you'd change 'em.

**What's** your

#### F-Zero GX

It's back, but there's still some engine trouble...

- Why weren't tracks incorporated from other games? Rainbow Road in *-Zero X* was a great idea. Nintendo has got such a long history – it should dig deep into its archives. Joe Coleman, Woking
- F-Zero GX looks great as the graphics are interesting, but the game is too short and way too repetitive. I want some more originality

in my games! Come on Nintendo you are usually the kings at this! Dave Kateley, Rayleigh

■ In *F-Zero GX* the racers are sometimes too bunched up, meaning one mistake can take you from first to 30th in a blink. There are too few levels available at the beginning, too, and most of them are just plain dull. Erol Sabadosh, London



#### **Zelda: The Wind Waker**

Are you lot STILL not down with the cel-shading?

- I have to say, The Wind Waker rules, but I still think it looks like a little kids' cartoon when it comes to the graphics. Let's have a proper warrior Link in the next game, rather than an infant.

  Anon, Surrey
- The Wind Waker has mini-game compared to Ocarina. The bosses were not really challenging enough and

the cel-shading made it look like a kids' game. Sort it next time! Anon, via email



"They say a million monkeys sat at a million typewriters for million years could write the works of Shakespeare. *Resi* Evil Zero was a tenminute, five-monkey **ob.**"Ben Paddon, via email



- SSX Tricky
  It's really addictive, but later courses are too bendy which gets annoying. It's also extremely slow when you just want to go fast. Phoenix Griffiths, Port Talbot
- Soul Calibur II It's GameCube's best fighter, but it could have done with a much clearer story line as it gets confusing too often. Craig Anderson, via email
- Super Mario Sunshine It needs more levels and more kicking of Bowser's ass. Wiggler and Piranha bosses are cool, but Bowser's top. Danny Marston, via email





- Metroid Prime A perfect game ruined by cheesy American voice-overs. They completely wrecked it! Adam Marable, via email
- FIFA 2004 The new Off The Ball control is so hard to use that golden chances go begging every time. Keep it simple for the next one, EA. That's what Winning Eleven does best. James Francis, via email
- Viewtiful Joe Why do all the bosses have to come back for another go? I killed them once; I don't want to do it again! Erol Sabadosh, London



Email your improvements to the latest GameCube games to tim.street@emap.com Remember, thumbs up or down doesn't cut it. We want to know how you'd make them better.





Pop Idol

I disagreed with your review, even though I finished Pop *Idol* pretty quickly. I thought the songs were really good and Simon Cowell was okay. There should be more games like this on GBA. I think they work well.

R. Downey, Lancaster

Sim City 2000 I can't believe you gave this game such a low score. Okay, it's no classic, but this kind of game is perfect for GBA and I'd like to see more of them. The only trouble is it's so addictive I keep missing my bus stop.

Dave Green, Milton Keynes

**could play** *Advance* IIIIHI

Evan Thompson, London

#### Tiger Woods 2004

- I was impressed that Electronic Arts put the analogue-style swing into this handheld version and I think that overall it's a brilliant game to play. It's well hard though (unlike the GameCube version) which is a good and a bad thing.
  Wayne Armstrong, Middlesex
- I absolutely love the GameCube version, but I think that this is pretty bad. The swing is really tricky to get right because of the GBA's D-pad and Putting is a real chore. I think a more arcade-style golf game would have been much better on the small screen.

#### **Dave Watts, Preston**

- It's too easy to score goals, but it's incredibly addictive. The action is also a little bit slow, but for some reason I just can't put this down. F. Tomlinson, Dorset
- FIFA 2004 is a great game to pick up and play. I love having a quick match on the bus to college. I usually win because it's a bit easy, but when you're tired of winning you're probably tired of life. Definitely one of the best sports games on GBA. Chris Addison, Norfolk

#### "Amazing. I thought Final **Fantasy Tactics** was superb, like Advance Wars on dry land. Strategy fans should get it."

Peter Brant, Barnsley

#### Final Fantasy Tactics Advance

- At last, something to rival the supreme Advance Wars! FFTA is truly brilliant, hugely addictive and looks fantastic. I was worried that it'd be dull, but the whole game is set up brilliantly, leading you gently into the action before grabbing you.

  Jon Abbott, Wrexham
- You said it was like Advance Wars. It's not. It's tedious and dull and it just looks murky and dark. I got seriously bored pretty quickly and went back to my copy of AW right away.

  Alan Riddings, Wycombe
- While everybody's waiting for a proper FF game on 'Cube, those in the know are playing this gem. No doubt it won't be top of everyone's Christmas list, but it ought to be. Best 30 quid l've spent in ages. Rob Stanford, via e-mail



### Return of

- I love all the official stuff in this game, I can't wait to see the movie. If this is anything to go by it should be amazing. M. Copper, Maidstone
- I can't believe they can sell games like this by the truckload because of the association with the movies. This has nothing to do with the cinematic masterpieces that we know and love. It's repetitive and boring and it made my fingers hurt like a Balrog had trodden on them. Do it some justice! Will Anderson, Cheshire

#### Advance

■ This game is almost perfect! Even though it can take many attempts at a mission to complete it, it just brings you back for another go. It would be even more awesome if each character had exclusive machines to use. Dom Walker, via e-mail

■ The new CO powers add another dimension to the Advance Wars saga. I loved playing this game from start to finish. I don't think it can get any better. All we need now is a bigger, bolder GameCube version. Ian Smith, Truro

- There's so much replay value it's untrue. I think that Nintendo has really found a gold mine with the Advance Wars series as it's just so addictive, deep and fun to play. My favourite bit is seeing the new COs and their powers. Andy Macintosh, Ripley
- I can see what they've tried to do, but for me it just doesn't work. I really enjoyed the first game and was expecting something a bit more from this sequel – sadly it's pretty much the same. I took it back after a few days and swapped it for Mario Advance 4. David Dean, Tamworth

Email your improvements to the latest GBA releases to Dom at dominic.wint@emap.com Remember, thumbs up or down doesn't cut it. We want to know how you'd make them better.





## Masterclass

**Busting the hardest parts** 

How to...

# Find the sneakiest short cuts and rudest routes in Double Dash!!

If you find yourself trundling in last over and over again then you definitely need some help from the kart kings at NOM UK.



#### I Luigi Circuit

#### **GET STUFF AND MISS THE MONSTER**

Where... Look for a road to the right after the first straight. It takes you around the bomb monster and leads to the edge of the big curve, allowing you to easily get onto the upper flat section. This does not appear on the 50cc version.

Advantage... You can pick up a double item bonus here before you reach the curve, giving you an edge over your opponents. Using this route will also help you avoid the monster.

Disadvantage... It's not really a short cut. The monster is more likely to get in your way should you decide to go this way. It might save you a fraction of a second at best, but not really enough to make any difference to the race.



#### 2 Luigi Circuit

#### **GET A DOUBLE BONUS**

Where... Just before the last bend there's a short track leading off to the right. Look for it as you go up the slope. This is similar to the first short cut. It does not appear in the 50cc version of the track.

Advantage... You can pick up a double item and easily get on to the upper part of the final bend. Two items could help you knock out the leader and allow you to catch up just before the finish line, very handy for last-minute recoveries.

Disadvantage... This is not a short cut and does not save any time. It's difficult to spot and usually by the time you see the road it will be too late to



#### 3 Peach Beach

#### **GET THE HEAVY FIREPOWER**

Where... Shortly after the start you should turn left into a green pipe. It will then fling you back out through the air.

**Advantage...** It chucks you out through a double item bonus that always gives you some of the best stuff. If you get a Triple Mushroom Boost this will allow you to catch up any time you lose and the second item is usually something juicy to help you knock out the other karters.

**Disadvantage...** Using this green pipe will slow you down as it takes you well out of your way. The worst-case scenario is that you don't get any useful items and all you've done is wasted your time and fallen behind the pack.





#### 4 Peach Beach

#### MISS THE SAND CREATURES

#### ITEM REQUIRED: Mushroom Boost

Where... A ramp on the beach to the left as soon as you pass the first corner.

Advantage... You get a double item bonus for going this way. It also bypasses the first set of sand creatures.

**Disadvantage...** It's slower to go this way and you only have a thin patch of shallow water to drive through so it's easy to fall off. Only use it if you really need items. Otherwise, stick to the main route and get on the speedier paved section to the right.





#### **5** Mushroom Bridge

#### GAIN VALUABLE SECONDS

Where... After coming out of the first tunnel section there's a gravel path leading over the hill on the right.

Advantage... This short cut will shave a few precious micro seconds off your lap time. Disadvantage... If you take the short cut then it sends you back on course at the wrong angle so you need to turn sharply to the right. If you make a mess of it you can easily lose the time you gained by going this way.





#### **Masterclass**

#### 6 Mushroom Bridge

#### HIT THE BOOST PADS

Where... Drive up the sides of the massive bridge after the second tunnel section.

Advantage... There are boost pads all the way up, allowing you to gain lots of speed.

Disadvantage... It's very narrow. Most of the time you'll fall off. If you go off into the water on harder difficulties you may lose yourself any chance of winning the race. This is for skilled drivers only.





#### 7 Mushroom Bridge





#### **GET A DOUBLE ITEM**

Where... Immediately after crossing the big bridge and pretty much in line with the start. There is a short road that leads you down to a green pipe on the righthand side.

Advantage... Going through the green pipe will boost you back onto the track with a double item bonus.

Disadvantage... This road will not save you any time worth bothering with and the tight angle of the corner means you have to slow down or risk crashing into the barriers. The tube also produces bomb vehicles that explode if you get too near them.



#### **8** Daisy Cruiser

#### **GET ITEMS AND HIT TOP SPEED**

Where... After the dining hall there's a huge hole in the track. You can't miss it.

Advantage... You get a double item bonus in the depths below and the fan tube blows you back up to the top at high speed.

Disadvantage... This alternative route won't

Disadvantage... This alternative route won't save you any time worth mentioning. Also if you speed into the hole it can slow you down if you bang the side as you enter the hole.





#### 9 Mushroom City

#### **AVOID THE TIGHT TURNS**

Where... At the first fork, go straight and look for a pink path on the right. Advantage... This cuts between the two different routes, allowing you to avoid making the tight right-angle turns. It also brings you out at a nice angle to take the following right-hand bend at speed.

**Disadvantage...** The route is narrow and bendy. If you make a mistake you'll bump into the walls and lose time. Only go this way if your driving skills would make an F1 driver blush.



#### **10** Mushroom City

#### **GET AN EDGE AT THE END**

Where... The thin left-hand route when you are on the overpass bridge right before the finish line.

Advantage... Taking this strip will shave a few precious micro seconds from your time right before the finish line.

Disadvantage... The piece of track is extremely thin and it's very easy to fall into the hole on the left or bump into the wall on the right — and that would end your race real quick, wouldn't it?



### **Busting the hardest parts**

#### Yoshi Circuit

#### **GET AHEAD OF THE PACK**

ITEM REQUIRED: Mushroom Boost

Where... After the first few bends there's a rock arch where the track bends left. Use a Mushroom just before the water hole to jump it. Advantage... This will cut seconds off your time and boost you ahead of any nearby competitors. You'll completely avoid the bend on the left and should come out ahead of the pack

Disadvantage... You must use a Mushroom Boost just before the gap. If you mess up you'll fall in and lose time.



#### **12** Yoshi Circuit

#### **GET ITEMS AND A BOOST**

ITEM REQUIRED: Mushroom Boost

Where... After the tunnel there's a gap in the barriers. Look for a small hump of grass and drive directly over it using a Mushroom Boost. Aim slightly to the right as you go over and you'll land in a secret tunnel. Advantage... It'll save you seconds and there's a double item bonus in the tunnel. It also lets you avoid a tricky part of the course. Disadvantage... It's hard to get into. If you're at the wrong angle or

travelling too slow you'll end up in the water.



#### **Dino Dino Jungle**

#### **BEAT THE REST UP THE HILL**

Where... Dodge the giant dino's feet and

go through into the tunnel. Head to the right straight afterwards and drive onto the thin strip of planking.

Advantage... The boost pad will speed you along nicely while the other drivers are chugging slowly up the hill. If you get round to the top you should have gained a fraction of a second.

Disadvantage... It's very narrow and, as the boost makes you go very fast, there's a good chance you'll fall off. If you take this route you will also miss some handy double item bonuses on the left route.





#### **Dino Dino Jungle**



#### **AVOID THE OBSTACLES**

#### ITEM REQUIRED: Mushroom Boost

Where... Go right after the second tunnel

into the cavern. There's a broken bridge that you can jump over using a Mushroom. Advantage... If you have the Mushroom and successfully make the jump you will gain seconds and completely avoid a difficult obstacle-laden part of the track.

Disadvantage... You have to remember to save a Mushroom Boost from earlier in the

race, especially if you took the first short cut and missed the double bonus earlier. Without a Boost your kart will trundle over the bridge and fall into the crevasse.



#### **Bowser Castle**

#### SKIP THE TIGHT BEND

Where... When you reach the section where the giant Bowser statue spits fireballs at you, look for a gap in the barrier and drive over to avoid the bend on the right.

Advantage... This sneaky short jump completely avoids a tight bend and will save you a few seconds.

Disadvantage... To make this leap you need to drive straight at the Bowser statue, so you need to dodge giant fireballs for longer than otherwise necessary. If you go too fast when you make the jump you risk driving off the other side when landing.







# Become leave Eric crying like a small baby a true skate pro

T.H.U.G. is filled to bursting with some of the toughest tasks yet seen in the skate series. Here we show you how to beat the six hardest.

#### **Winning Lines**

At the end of the game, Eric races off into the distance and you have to follow him all the way around New Jersey. You don't have to do it all in one combo, but you must collect all of the hand icons that he

drops. If you make a mistake it's best to start again as you'll have it all on to continue if you bail. These are the four main problem areas that you have to overcome.



Follow Eric across the bridge and watch out for his little molotovs. Once you've gone around the bend at the bottom and you're heading back towards town, Eric will leap up onto the electricity pylons. You can follow him if you hit the ramp at the correct angle — straight-on is best. You don't need to jump again until you've made it over the bridge.



Leap the gap between the two sections of the bridge. Then ride the rail until the very last second before jumping across to another set of electricity wires. Eric will then drop to the floor and continue on an easier route for a while.



You'll need to hit another ramp to get back onto those wires again, then drop to the street below and jump onto the railings surrounding the little playground. Next, transfer on to the climbing frame on the right-hand side to switch to the other side of the playground.



Once you're back on the fence you'll need to time it just right so that you can get the height from the break in the railings and get up to the final set of electrical wires. Fall to the pavement and collect the last few markers.





Congratulations! You've bitch-slapped Eric to within an inch of his life and saved the day. Now it's on to the insanely hard Sick difficulty setting, which should see you battering the board until this time next year. Trust us, it's tough enough to keep you playing for ages.

### **Busting the hardest parts**

#### **Making the ultimate tape**

You guys are no slouches on a skateboard and we reckon you're all good enough to work your way through the main game without us holding your hand. But if you want a quick route to the grand finalé

then you'll find it in the 20 easy-to-follow steps below. Once you've assembled Stacey Peralta's dream skate team, these are the five easiest challenges for you to try.



Jump just before the end of the ramp and hold and nto Acid Drop to the ramp below.



No Comply or Boneless to get extra height off the next ramp. Then Spine Transfer into the higher bowl.



Make sure you're central and heading straight forward as you exit the bowl to land on the ramp.



By now you should have all the time in the world to do a Spine Transfer over the final ramp.



Your first task is to Transfer from the lower to the higher wall, then Grind until you get the second tape.



After you collect the fifth tape, jump and Grind to hit the Xmas lights. Ride these to the end.



Jump off the lights and aim for the next tape on top of the building in front. Miss and you'll have to retry.



Then it's a case of aiming straight at the last two tapes, making sure you hit the ramp at the right angle.



Hitting the three Spine Transfers is easy, just make sure you keep your boarder heading straight.



Exiting the third Transfer, turn right and Grind the wall at the front of the hotel to start your Combo.



Do a big air trick on the ramps outside Slam City, Revert to Manual and head to the right again.



Grind the wall at the side of the hotel. Manual your way to the big fountain and do a massive Grind.



After the second one, use the ramp to climb to the top of the building and move around to the left.



The fifth Transfer is over the Out of Bounds gate at the far end. It looks big, but it's pretty easy to make it.



Transfers six and seven are over the stair sets in front of the comps area get a shallow take-off angle.



The final one is in the exhibition area. Jump over the photographer's head and onto the higher ramp.



A cheeky way to do the first three tasks in this is to try some Flatland tricks. Start with a Manual and go from there.



Keep an eye on the multiplier as well as the balance bar to make sure your score's getting close to the target. Always Flip out of Manuals.



The fourth challenge gives you just enough time to head for the ramps behind the police car that's in front of the hospital.



You'll need to do a Flip and a Grab to get the points, but the Wilt's Soup of the Day Transfer should add the extra you need to succeed.

# Time saver

Okay, this has to count as one of the best short cuts in a game. It takes you from Donut Plains Level 1, all the way to Bowser's Castle in eight levels, rather than the 50 it would normally take.

beat the game in **30** minutes

HOW TO

Sneak your way through the awesome *Super Mario World 2* with this time-saving guide...

# Get Cape Mario and go right to the end gate, but don't finish. Kill the enemies, sprint left and fly up on the right side of the green block outlines. Land on the yellow pipe.

#### **Donut Plains Secret 1**

Once you've been through the purple and orange pipes, look out for a POW switch up ahead. Hit it and hurry to the right, then hit the block left of the keyhole.



#### **Secret Donut House**

In the second area, hit the POW switch—the arcret door will appear. Reveal the centre from the middle question block. This leads to Big Boo. Hit has with three purple blocks.



#### **Star Road I**

At the start of the level, go all the way to the right. Now Spin Jump down to the right to find another Key. As before, use it to unlock the nearby door to take you to Star Road 2.



#### **Star Road 2**

Swim to the end, but instead of entering the pipe there, swim down to the gap on the bottom right of the screen. Carry on swimming until you reach the Key.



#### **Star Road 3**

Take a blue block and lob it at Lakitu. Next, jump onto the cloud and travel upwards. You'll find the key in the question block on the left and the keyhole on the right.



#### **Star Road 4**

Go to the first green platform after the platform made of grey blocks. With Cape Mario, walk off the right-hand edge of the platform and float left to the Key.



#### **Bowser's Castle**

Here you'll find eight rooms, each of which contains a challenge. Luckily, we know our way

around this part of the game, so you can go straight to the easy tasks.



#### CHALLENGE ONE – ROOM TWO

This is the second room in the first corridor and all you have to do is navigate the wire fence and avoid the enemies.



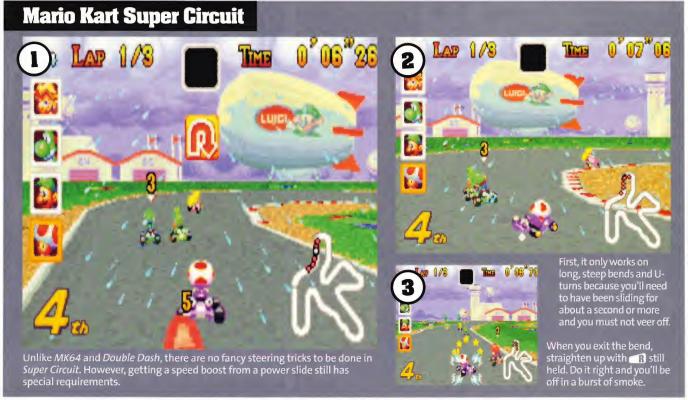
#### CHALLENGE TWO – ROOM FIVE

This is the first room in the second corridor. All you have do is run all the way to end of the room before the spikes hit you.

# The art of power sliding

If you want to be the best at Mario Kart 64 and Super Circuit, master these power sliding techniques and shave seconds off your lap times. HOW TO... skid better than Colin Mcrae





### **Masterclass**

# (Nintendo Official Cheats

Humiliated by a pesky boss? Can't be bothered to play to the end just to unlock a new character? Use these, baby.

#### STAR WARS REBEL STRIKE

#### Blast your way through this lot

The first few cheats for *Rebel Strike* have trickled out. No doubt there'll be plenty more to come and when they do, you'll find them all here.

HOW
Enter the passcode FREEPLAY
Enter 'LOOKNOM' at the Passcodes screen
Enter 'THEDUDES' at the Passcodes screen
Earn Silver Medals on all missions and bonus missions
Complete Tatooine training at all four times of the day
Earn Bronze Medals on all missions
Earn Gold Medals on each mission



Warning: using these cheats may cause you to turn to the dark side

#### THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN

et yourself a new motor
th these cheats, Homer will be burning around Springfield like a
racer These cheats MUST be entered on the Options screen

UNLOCK	ном	
Faster cars	Hold down ► + R and press (3, (3, (3), (3)	
Even Faster cars	Hold down 🕒 + 🔞 then préss 🗘, 🗘, 🗘	
Itchy & Scratchy cartoon	Collect all the Cards on every level	
Red brick car	Hold down ( ) Rither press B, B, Y, X	





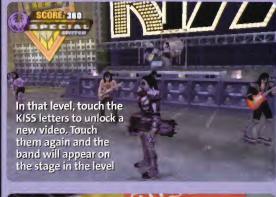
#### **TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND**

#### Uniock a secret level

Are you feeling the pain? Not up to mastering the board? Enter these codes on the Cheats menu.

CHEAT	ENTER
Perfect Balance	LETITSLIDE
Perfect Manual	KEEPITSTEADY
Unlock all videos	DIGIVID







#### **SONIC ADVENTURE DX DIRECTOR'S CUT**

#### Mini-game level-select cheats

If you've managed to grab enough Sonic Emblems to unlock the awesome retro Sonic titles, then these cool level-select codes will come in very handy.

HOW CHEAT Hold , , and on the Sonic 2 Stage select in Sonic 2 title screen and hit @ when Tales' eyes are closed on his second blink On the Sonic Chaos title screen, Stage select in Sonic Chaos △, △, △, △, □, △, □, △, ⑤ Press ( twice, three times, Stage select Sonic Labyrinths six times and nine times on the Sonic Labyrinth title screen. On the Sonic Spinball sound test, play the track numbers

····· HOW TO GET THE MOST FUN OUT OF YOUR GAMES ·····

HIT 'N' RUN, MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!

The settings

Players, use Grand Prix mode, so you can only play up to two players. Any more and GP mode will not be an option. choose any cc you want, but we found 50cc too easy and 150cc tough enough without an assassin on your back. it doesn't matter which Cup you choose, but it's most fun when both players are equally familiar with the tracks.

#### The rules

Player One has to try and do as well as he can in the races while Player Two tries their best to make Player One lose, using any means possible – firing weapons or bumping them off course. Write down Player One's score, then swap roles and see if Player Two can get a higher overall score.

#### The last time we played

Mike and Tim

Tim's the boss so he takes control as Player One and chooses the simple Mushroom Cup. With Bowser in his cart, Mike fires off giant shells a plenty, but can't stop Tim from winning the first two races. He takes a beating in the third and final stage though, leaving Mike with a score of 26 to beat. Mike has the power sliding skills, but not even they can get him away from the Red Shells shot by Tim's Koopa and Paratroopa duo. It's 18 points to Mike. Not this time, son.

#### **Get involved!**

Do you have any wacky ways of getting more out of a game? Let us know. Tell us your idea in the same way as above, and send it into New Ways to Play at the usual address, with your mug shot, too. C'mon, don't be shy.

A SIMPLE CALL YOU'VE GOT THE CHE TOP WALKTHROUGHS PLUS OVER 0,000 CHEATS & TIPS

#### GAMEGUBE -

Ace Golf Aggressive Inline American Pro Trucker Animal Crossing B = 0 2

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illy Halcher and Giant Egg
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BloodRayne Blue Storm, Wave Race BMX XXX

Burnout Burnout 2 Point of Impact

Burnout 2 Point of Impi Bust a Move 2 C = 0 3 Cel Damage Celebrity Deathmatch Conflict: Desert Storm Crush Bandicoot Crush Hour, WWE

Die Hard: Vendetta

Dinosaur Planet
Doshin the Giant

E = 0 5
Enter the Matrix
ESPN Int. Winter Sports '02
Eternal Darkness
F = 0 6
F1 2002
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Filing Name FIFA 2004 Star Wars: Rogue Leader
Finding Nemo Streets of L. A: True Crime
Fox McCloud in StarFox Adv. Super Mario Sunshine
Freedom Fighters Super Monkey Ball 2
Freekstyle Super Smash Bros Melao

J = 1 0

James Bond 007: Nightfire Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4

Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast Top Gun: Combat Zones

Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death True Crime: Streets of LA

Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
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Leg. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
Leg. of Zelda: Master Quest
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Leg. of Zelda: Ocarina of T.
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
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Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Lost Kingdoms II: Rune
Luigi's Mansion
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Magical Mirror

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Barbarian
Batman: Dark Tomorrow
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu\*
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Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
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S = 1 9 Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F. Shrek: Extra Large Simpsons: Hit & Run Simpsons: Road Rage

Simpsons: Roda Roge
Sims
Skies of Arcadia Legends
Smugglers Run 2: Warzone
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Adventure DX
Sonic Mega Collection
Soul Calibur 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
SpongeBob Sq. Flying Dutch.
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
SSX 3 Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly SSX 3 Star Wars: Bounty Hunter Star Wars: Clone Wars

Star Wars: R. Squadron 3

Ghost Recon The Hobbit The Hulk
Godzilla: Destroy all Monst. The Return of the King
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Wolverine's Revenge
Worms Blast
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WWE Wrestlemania X8
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Sapphire & Ruby (P. Pinball)
Sapphire & Robert
Sonic Advance 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
Super Mario Advance 2
Super Mario Advance 4
Tales of Tohunga
Teenage Mut. Ninja Turtles
Tekken Advance
The Fellowship of the Ring
The Incredible Hulk
The L. of Zelda: Link to Past
The Land Before Time
The Lion King
The Simpsons: Road Rage
The Two Towers
Tiny Toons: Busters Bad Dr.







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# The Great

# (Nintendo)

C,

Have you got what it takes to be a Nintendo game ninja?



He's back. After a few months squatting in the gaming wilderness and sharpening his claws, Dave Every has returned, leaner, meaner and hopefully cleaner than before. He's certainly put those young pretenders to the sword, seeing off the combined might of the

Cubemasters and topping the pile in SIX different challenges this month. If we were allowed, we'd name this part of the magazine, Dave Every Dishes Out The Evil Game-Slaps To Your Face. But we're not.

GAME CUBE

B



#### MARIO KART: **DOUBLE DASH!!**

Name: Dave Every Score: 1:55:088 (Waluigi Stadium; 3 laps) What happened? It must be a fun Christmas at the Every household as Dave invites the

aged relatives to join him at the televisio-gram for a few relaxing circuits of Double Dash. Little do the aged aunts and uncles know, they'll soon be ground under the heel of Dave's fearsome, Captain Falconstyle game-jackboots and running, screaming as Every pursues them around the house, whipping them with a controller cable and screeching "loser!"

Of course, we can't be sure whether that's ever actually happened. But what we can be sure of is the closeness of this month's best-contested challenge. In fact, Every won by just under three tenths of a second, sending last month's top-dog John Zeepvat (1:55:331) and Mark Puddifoot (1:57:528) spinning with a well aimed Red Shell.

It's nice to see such good-natured competition, but when Dave said he'd eat the soul of anyone who beat his score we felt the gentle, cartoon racing spirit of Mario Kart had been lost. Also, apologies to Dave for losing the photo he sent us a few months back - we hope we've done you justice.





#### **NEW CHALLENGE!** F-ZERO GX

Name: Jonathan Williams Score: 2,455km/h

What happened? We didn't get around to setting an F-Zero GX challenge last month, but thankfully Jonathan Williams was arrogant enough to submit his score anyway.

Jonathan didn't mention whether or not he was wearing a skin-tight blue jumpsuit and shoulder pads when playing, but he did claim that his score was "unbeatable". That ought to be enough to get the rest of you going come on, he's laughing at all of you!



#### **PIKMIN**

Name: Mark Puddifoot

Score: 240

What happened? Those tiny, delicious plant monsters, the Pikmin, may have slipped from the gaming menu of most Nintendoids, but

they're alive and kicking here. Mark spent literally minutes practising before he destroyed Dave Every's previous top score of 232. The key, Mark says, is to "get the Pellets to the right coloured Onions". Ah, if only the rest of you had thought of that as well. Think next time... think!



Make sure to get your entries in by December 23rd if you want to be in next month's NOM UK

# BEAT THIS!

*Mario Kart: Double Dash!!*, Time Trial, Waluigi Stadium, 3 laps: D. Every; 1:55:088

**Super Smash Bros. Melee**, Home Run Contest, Jack Thompson; 3,332.6m

**Burnout**, three laps of the Interstate course. Nathan Cass; 6:33.133

Super Monkey Ball, Monkey Target, ten-round match. Arman Faghihi; 13,240

**Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4**, Campus level, single combo. Sean Robertson; 15,906,033

NEW CHALLENGE!

**F-Zero GX**, Sapphire Cup, Port Town, Long Pipe, best lap time. Dom; 0:57.891

**Super Monkey Ball**, score on Advanced level. Roberto Buono; 740,926

Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader, Battle of Hoth. Dave Every; 3:15

**Tiger Woods 2004**, Scenarios mode, SZ Challenge 1 (targets). Dave Every; 87,900

**Star Wars Rogue Squadron III: Rebel Strike**, Raid at Bakura. Adam Raine; 6:09

NEW CHALLENGE!

**F-Zero GX**, top speed at Aeropolis Multiplex. Jonathan Williams; 2,455km/h

*Mario Kart: Double Dash!!*, Time Trial, Peach Beach, 3 laps. Dave Every; 1:19:830

**Pikmin**, grow the most Pikmin, Challenge mode, Impact Site. Mark Puddifoot; 240

**Wind Waker,** mail-sorting. Dave Every, John Zeepvat and Dean Hailstone; 33 letters

**Soul Calibur II**, quickest time on Arcade mode, Easy setting. Dave Every; 0'58"86



BURNOUT
Name: Nathan
Cass
Score: 6:33:133
Got some
advice? Nathan
works at a GoKart track —

probably oiling Peach's wagon and putting Bananas on the track — so it comes as no surprise that he aced this one, using the Muscle car and Manual gears. Just look at his race face — that'd even scare Bowser.







HAWK'S 4 Name: Sean Robertson Score: 15,905,033 Tell us about it:

"I pulled off

big grinds and Manuals in spurts to multiply my score and used Steve Caballero – he's my best character." We say Steve Caballero kicks ducks.



SUPER MONKEY BALL Name: Roberto Buono Score: 740,926 Tell us all: Roberto has

fanned the flames of monkey war this month, rubbing Puddifoot's simian nose in the mud and tweaking his monkey ears: "This score destroys any previous efforts. The gauntlet is with Mr Puddifoot!"



	Character	Cleat Tune	Player Na
Rario	TALIM	0.58.86	BIG
151	SEUNG MINA	1'52"18	RAPHAE
Znd	RAPHAEL	20'07"65	CASSANE
3rd 4th	CASSANDRA	22'07'65	YUNSUN
5th	YUNSUNG	23'07"65	MITSURL
6th	MATSURUGI	24'07"65	TAKI
71h	TAKE	25'07"65	VOLD
8th	VOLDO	26'07'65	
9th	NIGHTMARE.	27/07/65	NIGHTM
10th	KILIK	28:07:65	KILIK



SOUL CALIBUR II Name: Dave Every Score: 0'58"86 Any info? Just 'cos we didn't specify a

number of rounds you lot thought you were all big and clever. Biggest and cleverest was Dave Every, beating off fellow laughing boys John Zeepvat and Steve Dunlop.

#### What to do now...

If you've bettered one of the scores on our leader board we want to hear all about it – but you'll need to get some evidence of your score (a photo of your TV is best) and send it along to us if you want to get famous.

your TV is best) and send it along to us if you want to get famous.

But that's not all – we want to find out where you did it, when you did it and how you did it. Make sure it's interesting, because if you've top-scored you'll be featured here, so you'll want to include a good quality photo of

yourself as well (if it's a digital pic, please provide a fairly hi-res version). And if you think there's a game that deserves to be in our list, just drop us a line at the usual address.

Send your top scores to The Great Nintendo Challenge, Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW or email them to kingsley.singleton@emap.com and he'll reply with a nice email telling you he's got your high score. From there it gets fed into NOM UK's Mother Brain and churned out as the lovely pages you see before you. Well that's what Kingsley hopes, anyway.

# We Can't Wait



# for These.M









## MGS: The Twin Snakes

Usually we reserve this space for the game that's going to be rocking your world next month. But rules, like necks, are made to be broken. Especially when we sneak out of Konami with a whole batch of new *Metal Gear* screens. Don't hate us, we're just doing our jobs, man. Here, we can introduce you to a few fresh faces. The lady with the sniper bead trained on Snake's back is Sniper Wolf. The guy in the gun turret with the bird on his shoulder is Vulcan Raven. You've got Meryl being given a hard time by Psycho Mantis and Solid Snake mashing up Liquid Snake. We know it's cinematics, but *Metal Gear*'s that kind of game and we're not giving much away – it's not like someone saying Bruce Willis is actually a ghost in *The Sixth Sense*.











# We Can't Wait For These...

# FF: Crystal Chronicles

Next issue, the Fantasy will explode onto the pages of NOM UK. Little men with improbable hair will be sent spinning through the air and when they hit the ground little numbers will rise from their bodies to indicate damage. It'll be well into 2004 before you get to buy it, but that means you can tear Mario Kart's 150cc Special Cup a new asshole before relaxing with this. Rock it.











#### Metroid: Zero Mission (GBA)

Proof that the world is full of idiots: hardly anyone bought *Metroid Fusion*. If you're part of the problem, ask yourself why you passed up one of the finest adventure games ever? You don't have an answer, do you? Well, just don't miss *Zero Mission*. We'll bet money that this will turn out to be amazing. If you want us to take YOUR money, email us.













#### Puyo Pop

When we first saw this, we were all like: 'Cool! GBA needs a decent new puzzler'. When the Sega man told us it was for 'Cube, we laughed. Not because it's funny, we just did. GBA, GC – it's all the same to us. How does it play? Well, little blobs drop into a well and you link colours to make them disappear. Yeah, you're laughing now, but it's addictive as hell.









#### | F-Zero: Falcon **Legend** (GBA)

Captain Falcon may have had a cruel joke played on him at the hero costume shop, but that's not slowing him down any time soon. To celebrate his new cartoon now airing in lucky old Japan, a new game's on the way based on his new-found animated world. It looks very much like there's a more significant story in the new game and the racers drive hollowed-out and the racers drive hollowed-out cows instead of space cars. Part of that last statement was intentionally misleading. Look at these screens though. Can you feel the speed? Oh, yeah, they're static. But you get the idea.





#### **Zelda: Four Swords GC**

That Zelda disc in the Mario Kart GameCube bundle, eh? What a prize! If you've got the Stars to pay for it, that is. Still, there's more Zelda on the way with Nintendo's 2D meets 3D spectacular, Four Swords.

There's no release date yet, so allow us to speculate while you ogle the pics. When has Nintendo ever released a game that you can only play in multiplayer? It doesn't make commercial sense. Some people stink too much to have friends, so we're expecting a cheeky one-player mode in this as well.





#### Astro Boy (GBA)

We like this already. First, it's called *Astro Boy* – a name cheekily walking the fine line between cool-as-hell and hilariously lame. Second, the guys behind *lkaruga* are coding it and they've got a pedigree for 2D platform action games. So, to recap: running, shooting and jumping done awesomely.











# We Can't Wait For These...



#### Kirby's Air Ride

Kirby, Kirby. Where are you? The pink one's single-button racing game has built up quite a following in Japan and the crazy internet kids have even worked out a way to get it online for pulse-racing multiplayer action. All we need now is for Nintendo to work out a way of getting it into UK shops. News just in: they've cracked it. They're going to use a new invention called 'trucks' and it'll be shaking its pink ass for your coins in a couple of months' time. Thank God for that, eh? If you don't really know what to expect, it's like a girls' version of F-Zero GX. We don't mean that in a bad way — it's still great fun, like.















The Metal Slug series rocks. Basically, you get dropped into a warzone and have to kill a lot of people. Left to right scrolling, awesome weapons, in you go. The dodging and killing is thrilling enough, but the animation is traditionally hilarious. At first, it's just dying soldiers. Fine. But later on you're looking at zombies, aliens, all sorts. Oh, and you get to drive mad tanks. And the bosses are really massive. And... well, just you wait and see.













#### | Pool Paradise

At some point, you'll realise you need a pool table. At this point a female usually crushes these dreams, be it a mother, spouse or whatever. *Pool Paradise* might be your saviour though. Out in March 2004, it transplants pool tables out of pubs and into exotic locations like those shown.

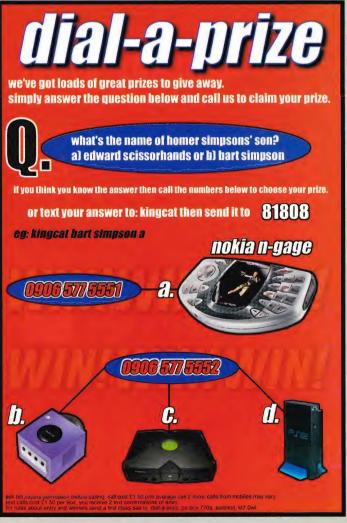


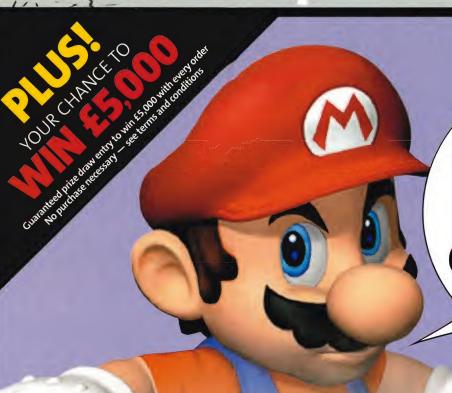
### R-Racing Revolution

Just published in Japan as we went to press, consider this a heads-up for the full *R-Racing* expose next month. Basically it's *Ridge Racer* plus *Gran Turismo*, which on our calculator equals CRIKEY CHARLIE. If you like power slides, we'll meet you back here next issue. Bring a helmet, guy.









# Get-a what YOU want this Christmas.

(Instead of a copy of Universal Studios from the Woolies bargain bin!)

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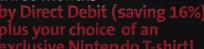
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# Your Mail



Once the exclusive preserve of movie stars and the better looking members of manufactured pop groups, the KFC Variety Bucket is here to be won and eaten by you just for sending in a good letter. Chicken – it's what top gamers eat.

#### Be better

I'm a big fan of Resident Evil games although I feel that Resident Evil is far too hard. It's not as if I can't play them, because I love Resident Evil Zero and it is by far the best game for GaméCube so far. Back to the point: sometimes it takes about nine handgun bullets and two shotgun shells to kill one zombie. And there are hardly any clips laying around the mansion! Aaron Tweed, Portglenone But you don't have to kill them all do you? You're supposed to run past a lot of them. You'll never have enough bullets to kill 'em all.

**Easily pleased** 

I've just got a chain of 36 consecutive Burnouts on Burnout 2 and you really wouldn't believe how happy that's made me. This is because I'm very bad at games and Burnout 2 is one of the few I'm any good at. No doubt a lot of people have got a much better score than that, but I don't care! I did it on Big Surf Shores with the Supercar. It's amazing that I didn't crash into a wall - my hands were sweating that much. I had to stop playing because the adrenaline rush was too big! Kate Griffiths. Via e-mail

If you're happy with it, that's all that matters. Thirty-six is pretty good going though.

#### RUNNER-UP

Steady your ship, sir

I wouldn't call myself an astronomer, but sail at night to a nice, calm spot in the Great Sea and equip your Telescope. Somewhere you will find famous star constellations like 'The Plough' and 'Orion'. Was there a planet known to such a person? Does this mean that there was such a place as Hyrule, Outset, Windfall and Dragon Roost islands? Was there an evil king like Ganondorf, a hero of time called Link and a Princess known as Zelda? Are there races known as Gerudos, Hylians and Koroks? Or is it just a coincidence? In one of your previous issues there was a picture of a Triforce in Japan. Did Shigeru Miyamoto make this up or not? Please answer my question! Joshua Bliszko

How about Hyrule and everything else in the games is made up and the constellations in the night sky are simply 'borrowed' from the real world. We like your idea better, but you do need to think about these things.

#### The Things You Send I Lurking in the drawer of one Dean Pesani was this strange little device from the Big N. Shaped like a Game Boy Pocket, there's a viewing hole on the back. When you look through you can see images from Mario Kart 64. Push the button on the bottom and the pictures rotate. And it's in Japanese! Double cool. Thanks, Dean. RUNNER-UP The Things You Send II We asked for anything and we expected many weird and wonderful items from the world of Nintendo. Frankly, we did not expect to be sent underwear. But that's what we got. A crusty old pair of Nintendo socks with images of Mario, Luigi



### Spotted!

#### **RUNNER-UP**

Hugely unpopular with Nintendo gamers, but obviously a firm favourite with town planners, the pink ball of love rolls up again this month to lend his name to another street, this time in sun-drenched Woking. Good work Max Bittleston of Surrey.



#### **RUNNER-UP**

On my trip to the south of France I found this shop on the sea front. As you can see it's called Zelda. It might be a coincidence, but how many other people do you know called Zelda? None! The shop even sold a crappy sword like the one Link starts off with!

Sid Goddard,
Wistaston
Sabrina the
Teenage Witch has
an Aunt Zelda.
And we reckon
you're fibbing
about the sword.
It's a cool shop
though. Do you
think they
accept Rupees?



and Toad on fetching

green, blue and red

stripes. Thanks to

Muirean Dee from

Dundrum for this...

unusual item.

#### How to get in touch

- > Write to: Your Mail, Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs PE2 5UW
- > email: nintendoletters@emap.com
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#### If only we knew

I dusted off my old Super NES and started playing Super Mario World. I noticed at the beginning of the game it says: "Princess Toadstool has gone missing again." But on Super Smash Bros. Melee she is called Princess Peach. Why did Nintendo change the name of Bowser's favourite Princess? Kenneth Sheraton, Cleveland Maybe she just fancied a change, or maybe she was in some elaborate witness-relocation programme.

#### Hmm...

Last issue you stated that the GameCube had dropped in price to £79.99. You described it as 'the biggest bargain since, well, ever.' This is untrue, because GameCube can be bought in Europe for about £70 and in the US for

**TEXT** THE **EDITOR** 84070 You can let us know how you feel about the world of Nintendo on a text! Tap in 'Txt', leave a space, add your message and send it to 84070. You must get permission from the bill payer before texting us as each text costs 25p to send. Every text sent to us can be viewed at www.clubnom.com and

■I'LL DIE before i see a sequel 2 CARMAGEDDON.

here's just a small selection:

- ■Last sunday the time went back one hour, but Pokémon ruby didn't. What do i do!?
- ■shame on you ninty For delayin9 Mario 128 again!
- is there ever 9oin9 to be a pokémon adventure on 9amecube?
- i reckon metroid prime is the best game ever. anyone who doesn't get it should be shot!

about £60. This 'bargain' is in fact just another example of rip off Britain.

Peter Curtis, Tonbridge

No it's not. Damn simpletons.

It happens all the time

Have any of you at the NOM UK office ever waited for a game to come out for months and when it finally does you find it's rubbish? Craig Anderson, via e-mail We wish we had a pound for every such occasion. We could retire to Delfino Island.

#### **Slim and none**

In issue 134 of NOM UK you put "the Cast of Super Mario World" in and one of the Koopas is called Roy Koopa. This made me think that Coronation Street's Roy Cropper has copied the name of this. Do you guys think this too, or is it just me?

Billy Beswick, via e-mail

Frankly, Billy, the odds are fairly heavily stacked against that being true.

#### **Hearts and minds**

When I first got GameCube I knew I was right, but a year on it seems totally different. Where are all the killer titles? Sure we have MK:DD, but PS2 has Manhunt and GTA. Unless Nintendo stops developers leaving and gets some belting third-party games, N5 could be their last console. Daniel Potter, Bristol We want to hold your hand and tell you it'll be alright, Daniel, we really do. The Big

N's class will show in the end.

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## #1 Super Mario 64

Veteran games journalist, Paul Davies started his career on *Mean Machines* in 1992. In 1993, that mag spawned *Nintendo Magazine System* (forerunner of *NOM UK*) and Paul was Deputy Editor by 1994. Since then, he has edited websites, CVG magazine and worked in games development.

"Playing with Super Mario 64 was, for the first time, like controlling a puppet on your TV in a huge magical world. Other games developers were still struggling to get their 2D characters to behave in an entertaining way, but here was Mario in 3D performing stunts that looked wicked and had cool uses, but were all very easy to perform. You felt like you were in the game with Mario when you were sliding down a helter-skelter, or running up the side of a mountain avoiding the tumbling boulders.



just took your breath away. It was also really cool how the new special effects in the game were linked with Mario's in-game abilities—becoming transparent or metallic. And, of course, to top it all off Super Mario 64 had THAT battle with Bowser at the end—which must rank in the top three of anyone's all-time, most-memorable gaming moments."



# **Next Month**

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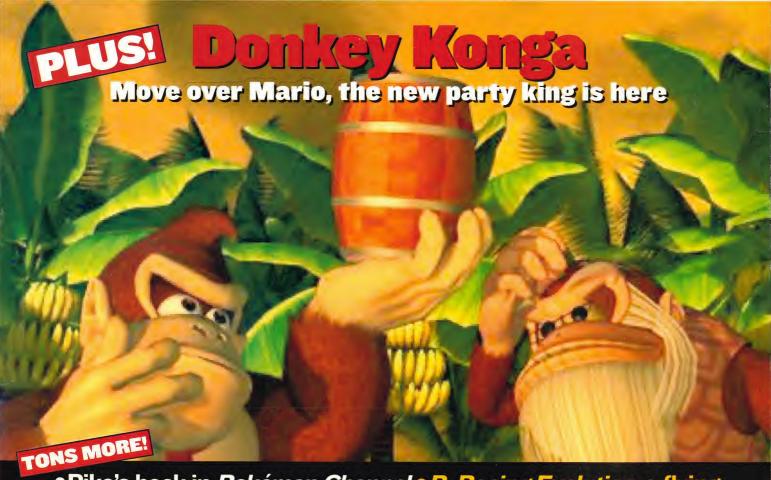
of the SSBM soundtrack straight from Japan! That's 14 tracks of pure Melee magic free with

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